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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Black Armour

THE death of Elinor Wylie is a reminder of how far we have traveled in the quick and varied decade since she first became articulate. While free verse was still on every writer's tongue, when a loose and sprawling realism was the vogue of the novel, and the manners of the subway seemed to be the coming mode of literature, she began that chiseled verse, wrought to the last sophistication of perfect utterance, which seemed to belong to another and more meticulous age. It had the subtle beauty of her favorite, Shelley, but a hard and shining outline which was certainly not his, and a metaphysics of fleeting yet ponderable beauty as remote from the poetical thinking of the last generation as Chinese esthetics from the milieu of Walt Whitman. Her poems are brief and disillusioned; they are moulded and carved and polished with the infinite care of a poet who, having known tragedy, is skeptical of impulse and heady emotion, and a believer only in the last fine residues of experience which, trivial in themselves, may yet contain the total of significance. Her last published book was "Trivial Breath"—

> Now that the shutter of the dusk
> Begins to tremble in its groove,
> I am constrained to strip the husk
> From everything I truly love.
>
> So short a time remains to taste
> The ivory pulp, the seven pips,
> My heart is happy without haste
> With revelations at its lips.
>
> So calm a beauty shapes the core,
> So grave a blossom frames the stem,
> In this last minute and no more
> My eyes alone shall eat of them.

This was an art not expected of the twentieth century, because we forgot that the body of this civilization, which has grown fat on mass production, has yet one mind of many minds that has already passed beyond easy satisfactions. It was indeed not surprising that Elinor Wylie took to prose, for one so happily bred upon "the immaculate bosom of the mother-tongue" was sure to use her skill upon fiction, the universal medium of our world, the Latin of communication between races and classes and languages. What surprised those who knew and admired her as a poet, was her success, for they had not estimated this desire of an overfed culture for the fine, the rare, and the determinedly artificial.

Others, especially in England, had turned from the direct statement of realism or the refinements of direct analysis, to the indirect, that says more than it means by the artifice of its saying. David Garnett would be an example, and the Sitwells, and many others. But there was a charm, elaborately subtle and yet simplicity itself in its effects, like the bloom of fine porcelain or the composition of Watteau, in her first novel, "Jennifer Lorn," that was the answer to something sought. It was all that modern prose had not been; it was poetic on that difficult plane which the eighteenth century so wisely kept for its verse.

The novels of Elinor Wylie strained always toward poetry and sometimes overleaped the boundaries of prose. There are passages in her "Orphan Angel" and in "Mr. Hodge and Mr. Hazard" which are pure poetry, and would have been perhaps more perfect if written as such. It is a nice question indeed, whether her very great talent was not here warped aside from its true destination by the exigencies of a period that demanded prose, and specifically narrative prose, if it was to read widely and call for more. In 1830 certainly, in 1910 probably, Elinor Wylie would have written in regular rhythm and left fiction to others. Yet in choosing (like Hardy) the novel for her more spacious work, she did what a writer must do, who accepts at one time or another the language of his age—be it drama, lyric, or fiction—to say to many what otherwise the many will not hear. We cannot regret her decision, and it would be folly to talk of labors lost. The prose of our 1920s has been enriched by her exquisite artificiality, and a generation ready to accept the flat prose of journalism as the language of the novel learned that rare and fine moods and rarer characters compounded of subtlety and artifice, de-

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For Elinor Wylie

By ROBERT NATHAN

SO we stand silent, having lost so soon
The best of us, the high and silver flute;
The clearest melody, the happiest tune,
The loveliest voice of all our times is mute.
That birdlike singing which no thrush could suit,
That icy song, as touching as a spell,
Colder than earth, yet sweeter than the fruit
Of those warm gardens which she loved so well,
Ends without coda. We shall hear no more
The crystal beat, the heart-enchanting words,
The high sweet music which was used to pour
From her full throat as freely as a bird's.
No more the song. In vain we try our notes,
Who have no flutes of silver in our throats.

This Week

"Ananias, or the False Artist."
Reviewed by FRANK JEWETT MATHER.

"The Terrible Siren."
Reviewed by BERNARD DE VOTO.

"On My Way."
Reviewed by SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

"The Palace of Minos."
Reviewed by HETTY GOLDMAN.

To My Black Kitten: To a Dog.
By ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH.

Pulling Seaweed.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

A History of Canada.
By W. P. M. KENNEDY.

Next Week, or Later

Two articles on Anglo-American relationships, the first by *Philip Kerr,* secretary to the British Prime Minister 1916-1921, secretary of the Rhodes Trust, sometime editor of *The Round Table;* the second by *Walter Lippmann,* editor of *The New York World.*

Arts Under a Dictatorship

(Italy and Russia)

By H. M. KALLEN

ONE of the many symptoms of the disturbance of mind prevailing among the comfortable classes has been their growing scepticism about the worth of democracy. There is hardly a western nation without its more or less organized group of alarmists who use Mussolini's Fascismo and Lenin's Communism to point the political moral and adorn the industrial tale. Especially Fascismo. If the oracles and vaticinations appearing in the *Morning Post* of London or the *Saturday Evening Post* of Philadelphia are to be believed, the Duce (pronounced, in Philadelphia, "douchy") his party, his methods, his system seem—of course in the long perspectives of moral and physical distance—the very substance of things politically hoped for, the very incarnation of industrial ideals unseen. Only upon the ark of the free fine arts has the current scepticism of democracy not yet laid its profane hands. Even avowed champions of Fascism and Communism declare that the artist, at least, must be free; and contemporary esthetic theory is at one with Plato in regarding the artist as a creature of inspiration, uncontrollable therefore, and not subject to the discipline and ordering of the common life. Such a subjection, it is believed, would work a restraint upon his personality to the detriment of his fertility. Art, as Mr. Bertrand Russell says, "springs from a wild and anarchic side of human nature"; while dictatorships are of the imperative which disciplines and regiments the wild and anarchic. Plato, who invented an ideal dictatorship, had no place in it for poets. The dictators of his Republic were to recognize their gifts and send them on to the next state. The dictators of Fascist Italy and Communist Russia have not the courage of this absolute logic. Their outlook and program should require, not outlawing the artist, but domesticating him; instead of giving free rein to his wild and anarchic nature, they should harness it close to the chariot wheels of state. If they succeeded, much of what goes for esthetic theory in contemporary speculation would have to be scrapped, and the status of the artist in modern society would be transformed.

* * *

As I see them, the theory and the status of the artist are functions, one of the other; the theory tends to regard both the ideas which a work of arts sets and the technique by means of which they are set forth as unique expressions of a unique personality that must work untrammelled to work at all. *What* it produces is held to be far more important and momentous than *how* it is produced. There is a consensus that his labor is "creative" who brings forth "significant form." I do not believe that this view of the artist and his works would be so widespread if his status in the national economy were not so insecure. Whatever be the medium he works in, his status is, on the whole and in the long run, that of the unorganized journeyman artisan of pre-industrial society. He produces for a limited market in a sharply competitive field. He is very rarely able to offer his wares directly to the possible customer: for that he is dependent on the class of middlemen known as art-dealers, concert and theatrical and lecture managers, editors, publishers, and the like. He must satisfy them that his work will bring them profits and more business. And especially, he must make it such as to secure and hold their interest and goodwill against the field of competitors and imitators. To win his place in the market he must strain after novelty and variety in his patterns;

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after, that is, *significance*, rather than excellence. Thus, in the last half-century, particularly, schools and fashions and programs have succeeded each other in the arts as do modes in women's shoes and hats. The highly individualistic competitive position of the artist in our modern economy sustains the notion that art "springs from a wild and anarchic side of human nature" in our modern esthetic theory.

It is no news that dictatorships are the enemies of individualism, competition, wildness, and anarchy. They regiment, they regulate, they standardize. Especially social and political ideas. They impose a grammar of assent to which all must conform, the artist no less than the tame and law-abiding citizen. An inquisitorial censorship prevents the individual from expressing any ideas save such as the dictators approve. *What* he is to say, hence, the artist must accept from the masters of the state; he is free only in *how* to say it, and not securely free in that. So in Russia and in Italy. Communism and Fascism each impose upon the arts a single theme, a single system of ideas and ideals. In each country the censorship establishes by its veto a limited system of symbols that must utter the orthodox theory of life. Each dictatorship pretends that its political order is the embodiment of all infallible doctrine as certainly a "deposit of faith" as what is usually called religion ever consisted of. Each requires not only the news of the day, political and economic opinion and philosophical ideas, but also the arts and sciences to conform to this "deposit of faith."

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Under such cirsumstances, what should one expect, especially in Italy, so much of whose tradition in painting and poetry is at the foundation of the arts of modern Europe? I looked, I must confess, with a more than open mind, and a considerable readiness to appreciate and to sympathize. But what I saw and heard and read there left me with the feeling that where art and thought are concerned, Fascist Italy is not alive, but drugged or dead. Amid the superlative inheritances from the past, I could find among all the pictures that I saw and music that I heard, no present breath stirring. The esthetic currency of the Paris of 1900 is the currency of the Rome of 1927. The Italians echo the graphic fashions of Paris as seasonally as they reproduce Parisian clothes. I could not discern even the shadow of a shadow of a coming Fascist ethos. Yet the journals are shrill in their devotion to what they call Fascist art. One declares that a Fascist art must be; another begs the faithful Blackshirt to develop a Fascist art—presumably out of nothing. What such an art is to consist of, how it is to differ from the arts of Renaissance Naples or Milan or Rome or Florence; what it is to say, and how, that the Risogimento has not said, you are not advised. Only, "a Fascist art must be." Mussolini's brief manifesto on the subject, contributed to *L'Arte Fascista*, is characteristic. "Let us not," he declared, "waste the patrimony that has come down to us from the past, and let us further and create a new patrimony which shall be the peer of that of the past. Let us create a new art, an art of our own type, a Fascist art." By all means, let us. I have found it a rule in Italy that you could make anything Fascist, art included, by just putting the word Fascist in front of it when you are talking about it. The expression "Fascist" works a transforming magic.

But except for that word, nothing happens. Education has been reformed, but is practiced as before the reforms, so that under Fascist administration, the ecclesiastical interest is better served than ever in the Italian schools and save for improved ballyhoo, the arts and the sciences are doing business only as usual. The same seemed to hold in all walks of life, save politics and business. Those and not the expansion of life are the ruling passions of Fascismo. In the world of art, consequently, nothing is happening: only the Futurists, whipping a dead horse and calling him Pegasus.

A dead horse: Marinetti, the chief hierophant of Futurism, was one of the most vociferous orators of Fascismo. Mussolini had been his intimate friend, and is said to have learned from him to like the last outcry in pictures. Marinetti has published a massy volume on Futurism and Fascism, and he continues to pretend, in spite of Fascism's having moved far away from Futurism to the extreme right, that the two are still stepping out together, hayfoot, strawfoot, side by side. I heard him one evening in Rome, at a soirée of the International Art Society. He sponsored a couple of young men, architectural students, who made it clear that they didn't like their professors at school and projected their dislike as a demand for a Fascist architecture. As an example of what such an architecture might be, one put on the screen an elevation of a gargantuan structure patterned after an airplane. Marinetti finished the evening by reciting to everybody's delight his "Bombardment of Naples." This is a poem of "free words," which is supposed to make you hear the bombardment. You do—with some uncertainty as to the *terminus a quo*.

The piece embodies the entire story of Italian Futurism—*vox, præterea nihil*, a war cry shouted into a vacuum. Marinetti claimed, and claimed with justice, that he and Mussolini invented the first Fascist ideology together; and he claimed, and claimed I suspect to down his own fears, that Fascismo and Futurismo are still one. For as a matter of fact, the two cannot live together in the same world. Futurism, so far as it stands for any ideals at all, stands for speed, for violent action, for dithyrambic utterance to hypnotize mobs with, for extreme individualism in ethics, anarchism in government, atheism in religion. It is against bureaucracy whether political or clerical; it is against organization in any form. It is against tradition.

Since it took power, Fascismo has been for all these things. It endeavors after a reconciliation with the church. It is seeking to bind Italians into a "corporative state." It is all bureaucracy. It is all for tradition in education, in the arts and sciences. Indeed its one positive and undeniable achievement in this field is the expansion of the liberal program of restoration and recovery of the monuments of classical antiquity. The work there is competent and extensive and entirely to its credit. The rest is on the lap of the Gods. To date, the laps of the Gods are clean. In another decade we may be able to guess if or that "a Fascist art must be."

Russia, after Italy, makes an extraordinary impression. I say nothing of the climate, which it is extremely difficult to discount, nor of the sharp contrast between the variegated snug hilltowns of the peninsula and the endless windswept monotone of the Russian plains. I say nothing of the exciting contrast of the peoples. I confine myself only to the one point that moves to sameness in the two countries: that both are governed by dictatorships organized as comminuted bureaucracies, operating from above downward, that both governments are revolutionary and have recently imposed their rule by force.

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Coming into Russia after Italy, an American individualist who believes that too much government is far more dangerous to men than too little, I expected that bad in this respect as Italy was, Russia would be worse. And from the point of view of great non-political corporations, like churches, Russia is. Although Fascismo is the religion of the Italian state and everybody is there compelled to make his political confession to the Fascisti, other cults, especially that of Roman Catholicism, are too powerful to be fought and too proud to compromise. Multiple allegiance, and thus a certain freedom of mind, is possible and can be maintained.

In Russia the only religion is the religion of the state. This is the deposit of faith attributed to Karl Marx and called Communism. It has no peers in power or station. It is taught as before the revolution the Christianism of Greek Orthodoxy used to be taught, and it bears about the same relation to the way of life. In matters of art and education, however, it is regulative. It ordains a regimen for the intellect and a pattern for the emotions. The stage, the atelier, and the publishing house are aspects of the activity of the State and come under the Department of Education. This Department is charged with the creation and enrichment of a communist culture. The notion is that culture is intrinsically communist or capitalist; that they are so by nature and not by employment. It is a false notion, as false as a notion of Democratic or Republican apples and onions or Single Tax or Socialist bonnets and babies; or that

> Every little boy or gal
> Born into this world alive
> Is born a little radical
> Or else a little conservative.

The fact is, all such classifications are secondary and eventual, the results of later association or use. By nature, babies are born, apples grown, bonnets are made. So are steam-engines and pictures and books. Whether they shall be called Republican or Democrat or Fascist or Communist, doesn't depend on what they are, but on how they are used, and by whom. As Lenin once sardonically remarked: he was quite ready to exchange communist wheat for capitalist locomotives. The wheat was communist only because it was in communist possession; the locomotives were capitalist because capitalists owned them. Once exchanged, communist wheat becomes capitalist wheat; capitalist locomotives become communist locomotives. It is their status and employment, not their natures that the exchange has altered. And so with all things, including art and culture, and religion. For is not the Russian orthodox church now in communist service?

In this respect, the practice of the Russians is wiser than their theory. For example, stories, plays, operas, written in Czarist times for Czarist audiences, are being published and produced as then but stressed and pointed for the new dispensation. One night in Moscow I was taken to see a much lauded rendering of Boris Goudonoff. It was sung in the conventional way. There wasn't any change in the score or the book; the artists seemed no better than such as I had heard in this opera before. On the contrary, the stage pictures and costuming alone were different. The poor was made to look so very poor and the rich so too, too rich. And perhaps there was an accent on peasant humility against boyar arrogance. The opera, which had intrinsically nothing to do with the matter, was being used to drive home the Communist dogma about the rich of capitalist states getting ever richer and the poor getting ever poorer.

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The social process of which this episode presents a sample is continuous, universal, and enduring. By it pagan Gods get transformed into Christian saints. The kiss-worn toe of the bronze St. Peter in the church of his name in Rome, was once the sound member of Jupiter in a temple of his name somewhere else. The figure which the artist models, takes various local habitations and new names, new characters and new duties, indifferently, and serves them all impartially. The Russian organization, being new, doctrinaire and experimental, simply has speeded up the process and rendered it self-conscious and discernible.

But it has gone farther. It has promoted and keeps stimulating a tremendous interest in the arts in its public schools, its trades unions, and its art academies. It has established the graphic arts, from the kindergarten to the college, as an important integer in the reformed school curriculum. a reform which, to have carried through, alone vindicates the revolution. The Russian Theatre is well-known in America, but not its background in theatrical work, from stage carpentery to playwriting and acting, done by all grades and levels of the school and industrial population, and by all nationalities. National self-determination is taken with Laputan seriousness in the Soviet republic; ethnic groups that have no alphabet for their vernacular are provided with one; those that have, are required to use it and to develop their speech in administrative and cultural activities. The cost is almost as great as the inconvenience, but the thing is being done. Everywhere you encounter signs of a great liberation of energy, that overflows or is directed into the arts. The works of the past are rendered easy of access in museums, schools, and elsewhere; performances, dramatic or musical, are made extremely cheap. The populace is encouraged and incited to go, to look, to study, to do. You cannot visit a single museum anywhere in Russia without stumbling upon large companies of soldiers and peasants and workers, adults and school children, personally conducted by competent guides who more frequently than not turn out to be distinguished and impoverished connoisseurs of the Czarist times. The works of the past are used to point the Marxist moral of our day; the works of the present have for their themes some visible embodiment of the Marxist faith.

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Concerning the quantity of such works there can be only wonder and gratulation. Their quality is another story. One can simply observe that social life seems no more than life in nature to create by single exemplars. You cannot have a raindrop without a shower, nor an individual without a species, nor an excellence without countless equal claimants against which it has won in its struggle to survive. In the arts as in nature, quantity is an insurance of quality, a promise that it shall emerge. There can be a best only where there are many less than best, and the Russian makes the promise of such a best where the Italian does not.

Like the Italian, the Russian government is bringing together, is restoring, is rendering accessible to

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the eye and the mind of the expert, great numbers of ancient monuments, forgotten works of all classes, buried in churches and manors and so lost to the delight and illumination of mankind. In the places where they are to be seen you can see the groups of personally-conducted natives being instructed in their history as statements of an idea and as achievements of a craft. Often the proper communist lesson is drawn, sometimes not. Drawn or not, the communist believers are meantime being familiarized with what the past has created. They are being initiated into knowledge of what is excellent in examples of the great tradition, and such knowledge is, let it be remembered, indispensable to a future for excellence. The arts no more than the artist can leap from childhood to maturity, from five years to thirty and five, eluding the intervening years. The excellent in the arts has a history not to be eluded or ignored if it is to have a future as well. This the Russians recognize. Their communist, like their former Christian faith, implies and judges and teaches pre-communist history; it also imposes upon the endeavor of all the arts a unity of attitude, a homogeneity of theme. Pictures to be seen at shows, plays produced in Peasants' Houses and Trades-unions' Halls, the work of the school children, all are stating one aspect or another of the Marxist dogma, all are using fairly-standardized symbols, all are communicating a definite faith, a single hatred, a single hope. The artist in communist Russia may not know, but he is like the artist of Catholic Europe of a long past day. He is not free to choose his ideas or to compose his figures. These he must accept from the moral atmosphere around him, from the deliverances of the doctrines of his church. The restraint is also a liberation. Having no need to think up *what* to communicate, he is able to think of *how*, to give play to his instinct of workmanship, to consider his craft and its ways. I do not know Russian and could not judge of the poetry, but the craftmanship of the quantities of pictures I found to be on a generally high level. It moves toward excellence rather than difference as an end. There is much hope in it, but only doubtful life. For the life of an art depends on the living of its artists, and this on their market. In Russia the State is the only market, and the State, even if rich—and it is at present miserably poor—cannot employ or otherwise provide a living for the great numbers of artists Russia has *in posse*. . . .

* * *

Here, then are two modern dictatorships, old states with new governments restoring ancient conditions of administration and control of all departments of civil life, the arts among them. In one of these dictatorships the arts are less alive than ever. In the other they have never been so alive before. While the historic record points to some kind of social control which will weight survival among the arts in favor of excellence rather than difference in any given phase, the contrasting effects of these two contemporary controls would indicate that there exists no necessary connection between a form of government and the vitality of an art.

On the face of it, the difference in effect between Communism and Fascism is a difference in intent, in goal and objective. Ostensibly, Communism is a leveller. It holds that all men are equal, but the differences between them are external and secondary, that they can and must be destroyed if justice is to prevail and the equality to be real and manifest. In practice this dogma has the opposite effect. The revolution has functioned not as a leveller but as a liberator. The individual is far freer in his person and his thoughts than ever before in his country's history. His opportunities are wider, more numerous, more varied; his life is richer by a dozen cultural dimensions added to it. His energies overflow; he has learned discontent and ambition; he wants more and works harder. And his team spirit, his patriotism, is spontaneously enhanced.

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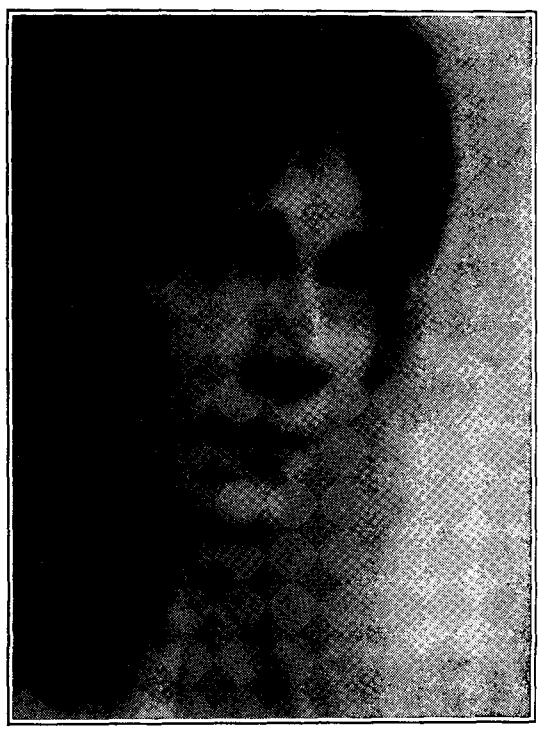
In Italy, precisely the opposite is the case. The Fascist faith starts with the dogma that all men are profoundly unequal; that the differences between them are internal and primary; that they can and must be preserved and intensified if justice is to prevail and the inequality be operative and manifest. To establish this dogma in fact, Mussolini told me, is the aim and end of Fascism, the rationale of the "corporative state," in which every talent is to have its due opportunity, every natural difference to find its social place. But the effect of Fascism has been precisely the opposite. It has not liberated the energies of the Italian people, it has dammed them up; it has not set free talent and put it to work; it has repressed talent. Under its dispensation the real inequalities of men are neither operative nor manifest. Throughout Italy, I sensed a mood all strain and tension, a posture of fear prompted by feelings of insecurity. I sensed it in all classes of the population. From Russians I got the opposite feeling. With the feeling go the works. Wherever the energies of men are sufficiently stimulated and enlarged, some will overflow into the arts. Whenever the ideas and moods which the arts communicate are sufficiently unified, sufficiently homogeneous, a type will be generated, excellence will emerge, there will be a great art. The *form* of a government can neither hinder nor accelerate this event. The *will* of a government can do either, or can cut it off. Not dictatorship, not democracy, but the intent of dictatorship or democracy is what determines the event. Communism and Fascism tell the tale.



ELINOR WYLIE

Pach Writes Dangerously

ANANIAS, OR THE FALSE ARTIST. By WALTER PACH. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1928. $4.

Reviewed by FRANK JEWETT MATHER

FOR many years Mr. Pach has been championing the Modernist theory and practice of painting with a fairly monastic patience and tolerance. But plainly in much well considered and temperate criticism he has been under a constraint from which he now emancipates himself. It is a pent-up Mr. Pach who speaks in "Ananias," a new and disconcerting Mr. Pach. Now it can be told. There is a faith, a *credo*, which all artists know. To this faith good artists hold at all cost; from it false artists flinch into time serving. These are the Ananiases. They keep back something, play for safety, straddle. Mr. Pach names some notable Ananiases—the late Kenyon Cox, Mr. French, Mr. Blashfield. They and their like have sold our esthetic birthright, so that our art has sunk to a level of baseness for which history affords no parallel. Such is the general motive, which is repeated to tediousness with variations.

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The general contention dates. We are back in the 1830's and the Romantic revival. Then the Ananias was the academician, and all who scorned him were true artists. Mr. Pach's deadline is more undulating, and more confusing. What is this faith to which all true artists must adhere? Mr. Pach nowhere clearly defines it, which is awkward for a well-meaning artist who wishes to escape anathema. A Romantic critic would have said that the faith was uncompromising self-expression. At times Mr. Pach seems to occupy this ground, and then he wavers and hedges. He after all knows that character is destiny, and recoils from the wholesale accusation of insincerity which he has elsewhere fulminated. Harry Wartrous may be as sincere as Henri Matisse. It is a distressing possibility that plainly keeps Mr. Pach uncomfortable in his new rôle of denunciatory prophet. He may possibly have some inkling of the dire alternative that if he is not expressing sure and important truths, he is merely making an ass of himself.

We leave the reader to balance this alternative, turning rather to certain controversial methods which throw light on Mr. Pach's judgment and vision in this new phase. Take a series of comments on Mr. French. During his trusteeship in the Metropolitan Museum, one fine Barye bronze has been put in storage, another has been moved from a good to a poor light. Mr. Pach here sidesteps. Of course Mr. French may have had nothing to do with these moves, but then he might well be sensitive on the article of animal sculpture, witness his own absurd lions for the New York Public library. Now if such an argument means anything at all, it means the Mr. French, in his capacity as an arch Ananias, was entirely capable of resenting and occulting masterpieces of Barye because his own lions had been laughed at.

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Here a mere fact may give comic relief to a situation rapidly becoming tragic. Mr. French didn't do those lions. It is a dirty thing to hit below the belt, and it is both a dirty and a silly thing to hit below the belt and ruin the wrong breadbasket. Apart from the issue of judgment and good manners involved, what is one to think of the eye that could for a moment suppose those impudent beasts on the Library steps to be creations of Mr. French's discreet and quietistic mind? Surely that eye was rolling in a frenzy something less than fine.

From a generally absurd, confused, and querulous book, a little salvage may be made. Where Mr. Pach writes of the bungling policy of our museums with regard to art in general and contemporary art in particular, he writes weightily and only with legitimate exaggeration. But here, as really all along, his quarrel is not with Ananiases, but with persons, who, being sincere enough, are subject to all the vagaries of a plutocratic art patronage in a democracy. It is a question of trustees who dictate policy beyond their competence, do not trust their expert staff, are impressionable from every quarter, are at once arrogant and timorous. Here is a real evil. But it does no good to describe blundering, hesitating, and blustering persons who are entirely generous, well-meaning and sincere—as Ananiases.

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One must deeply regret that obscuration of judgment which has led Mr. Pach, who has given us much excellent criticism in the past, not merely to adopt heavy-handed and disingenuous tactics, but even to mistake his objective. There is no likelihood that but for the perfidy of Kenyon Cox and Mr. Blashfield millions, instead of thousands of us would adore Matisse. We lack outstanding figures momentarily, but it is simply false to say that the average practice of painting is abysmally low. What we are witnessing is the throes of hectic or despairing individualism in a hectic and confused democracy. Mr. Pach's fight is Mr. Mencken's. And the method of heavy innuendo is no more promising as a cathartic than that of elephantine badinage, and much less amusing.

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served a diction also rare and fine, and could have it even in the machine age.

For Elinor Wylie, both in poetry and prose, was essentially the aristocrat as that term must be redefined for literature. It connoted once privilege, manner, self-discipline, and disdain of the petty, the gross, and the mean. It signified in literature the privilege of fine breeding in "that largesse which gives the lavish greater to the less," the manner of one who practises "a proud extravagance of giving" of the best in herself without compromise, the disdain of valiant and noble blood for easy triumphs over careless minds. As she wrote truly—

> If her opinion perishes or wins,
> Be her fidelity approved or slandered;
> The event is set: the woman never wandered
> In vile devotion to a lesser prince.

Her work was never easy; it was counter to the broader current of her times—fine goldsmith's work, intaglios, medallions, cut gems and engraved crystal, not the dynamos and skyscrapers of art. But it had the seal of loveliness upon it, and a perfection like those Egyptian crowns whose fragile but enduring beauty preserve the fine essence of a life proudly lived more surely than the pyramids.

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Victoria Woodhull

THE TERRIBLE SIREN: Victoria Woodhull. By EMANIE SACHS. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1928. $4.

Reviewed by BERNARD DEVOTO

THE Gilded Age has been having its assize before our contemporary questioners, and in Mrs. Sachs a judge somewhat more competent than most has got round to the era's most spectacular figure. Victoria Woodhull was the most scandalous person in a time whose major energy went into the production of scandals. A page of scarlet in other studies, and that page mostly guesswork, she now achieves a full length biography.

What about this beautiful hussy, this lovely doctrinaire? At a time when most woman reformers looked like bean poles wrapped with gunny sacks, she was so personable that she persuaded where others failed to convince. The age's free lovers were strong on principle and purely theoretical in practice, or they practiced furtively and avoided publicity. Victoria preached her doctrines with as much publicity as possible and practiced them in the same glare. She took up one by one, or in sets of a dozen, all the yeasty reforms of the day. She brought to them all the fervor of a convert and the sweet frenzy of idealism. She supported them while they could repay her with personal advertisement and then she dropped them for new causes to be supported, singly or in sets, with the same invincible energy. Only the spiritualism, with which she began, was consistent; she held to it throughout her career. For the rest, not conspicuously virginal, she was a vestal who tended the sacred limelight.

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Victoria was, she believed, primarily a feminist. She married herself (the verb is the only one to convey her genuine exaltation) to all the activities of the cause, beginning with spiritualism, healing, dress reform, and the lyceum circuit. Then she improved upon the idiom by taking up brokerage and blackmail, the first, at least, under the patronage of Cornelius Vanderbilt. Like Amelia Bloomer, Susan Anthony, and others, she became an editor in the cause—and this developed into her central activity. The suffrage movement seemed the heart of the cause and so she went careening into it, helped now by Ben Butler. She gave the suffragists a year or two of excitement, half hope and half terror, and then went beyond them by offering herself as a candidate for the Presidency. Meanwhile, free love had proved to be her true genius. It got her more publicity than all the other activities put together, which was satisfying, and it allowed her to coördinate her efforts in one magnificent set-piece of headlines. She preached it in the lyceums. She argued it and dramatized it and gave it the stimulants of pornography and blackmail in her weekly paper. She practiced it widely and attended to the exhibition of the fireworks. The age preferred its free love to be a dissipation rather than a principle and answered her with obscenity.

From Thomas Nast and Horace Greeley and Henry Ward Beecher on down to the ballad mongers of the streets, everyone assailed her with such abuse, such revolting insult, as has not fallen to the lot of another woman in America. (One misses in the formidable anthology collected by Mrs. Sachs the voices of the older and the younger Bennett. Surely one of them must have found phrases of incomparable nastiness for her.) The courageous Victoria, self-hypnotized if not indeed pathological with sincerity, fought back—and it had been indiscreet of Beecher to join the persecution. For Elizabeth Stanton had told Victoria all about Lib Tilton and, following the lead, Victoria had obtained over him the influence a good many women are believed to have obtained. She had become not only the mistress of Theodore Tilton, but also, according to her declaration and the belief of those who knew her best and the judgment of history, the mistress of Beecher himself. She had, at least, full knowledge of how Beecher practiced the principles for which she stood and for preaching which he denounced her. She said that she respected him for the practice, and perhaps she did. Mrs. Sachs, unhappily, has found out nothing about the alleged blackmail of Beecher, beyond the allegation and denials already known. Anyway, Victoria told the world about Beecher.

History will chiefly remember her for thus elevating the Beecher-Tilton affair from a widespread but typically subterranean scandal to an international sensation. Her doing so provided her with the utmost possible advertisement; and, though she seems not to have had the lust for martyrdom that one would expect, she found its attendant publicity very gratifying. For some years she glowed at white heat, her career a violent crescendo. Then it lapsed, when the Vanderbilt will was contested, and she went to England. Eventually she married wealth, and, in the pursuit of respectability, turned recreant to all her causes. Mrs. Sachs exhibits the tawdry anticlimax, the story of lawsuits and crusades to restore her name, with the interminable flood of pamphlets. The end is an old woman who had begun by essaying to destroy all social evil and who finished by helping the Sulgrave Foundation to be nice about the Washingtons.

These days it is almost true that a good biography need be little more than one which refrains from psycho-analysis. It is far from the only merit of "The Terrible Siren" that Mrs. Sachs, though obviously well acquainted with the science, indulges in no lay analysis. She avoids the neat and easy speculations which, in the hands of amateurs, are perhaps interesting, but certainly worthless. She nowhere drags in the inferiority complex that seven-tenths of our biographers would have substituted for facts. She does not even allude to paranoia, though Victoria was obviously in the wasteland between that and sanity, for the term is classification merely and would explain nothing. She confines herself to less speculative methods, creating a character on the basis of factual research. She notes an obsessional craving for publicity and a childhood that probably accounts for it, and to these data she refers all guesses when guessing is necessary.

The presentation of that childhood and the account of the early experiments with spiritualism, healing, and medicine-show drama are Mrs. Sachs's first important contribution. Another is her publication of a long monograph by Mr. Benjamin R. Tucker, who was one of Victoria's lovers and who pronounces the judgments about her to which Mrs. Sachs adheres. Another is her insistence on the process by which the ideas of intelligent people, notably Colonel Blood and Stephen Pearl Andrews, became the inspired revelations of Victoria. These indeed explain a hitherto inexplicable figure. And the explanation is made more valuable by a gallery of portraits marvelously well done. Chief among these are the sketches of Tennie C. Claflin, Victoria's earthier sister, and of Theodore Tilton. Mrs. Sachs, in fact, does better with Tilton than anyone else who has treated him.

A brilliant book. One makes a single complaint—the chronology is confusing because of the author's failure to mention enough dates. If biography is to be more than mere amusement, it must constantly be tied down to time and place. Apart from that, I feel that Mrs. Sachs has shown the way to improve the current output of Americana: let it become the avocation of novelists.

Day-by-Day Thoughts

ON MY WAY. By ART YOUNG. New York: Horace Liveright. 1928. $4.

Reviewed by SHAEMAS O'SHEEL

IF the title of this review is but a sorry pun on the name of one of the great unread English classics, it is nevertheless justified by the precision with which it defines the nature of the book before us. In form this is a diary, in substance a combination of autobiography and reminiscences. Beginning on September 1, presumably 1927, and ending on March 1, apparently 1928, Art Young has set down day-by-day whatever he has happened to think of. One entry will describe something he did or something that happened to him that day; the next day his thoughts will go back to incidents and experiences of yesteryear; and yet the next day he will be telling of his childhood in Monroe, Wisconsin. And all spiced and mellowed with his thoughts upon life and his tolerant, loving philosophy, the distillation of long years spent watching the pageant with the perspicacious eye of one who is both artist and social commentator.

A rambling book is the most delightful of all books when written by one with a genius for rambling—and Art Young has that. He gives a detailed account of his cat's maternal technique, and follows it with reminiscences of Emma Goldman, whose appearance he aptly describes as that of a *hausfrau*. He turns from a consideration of the beauty and quaintness of human legs to an analysis of fame; from reminiscences of Bill Nye, Eugene Field, and James Whitcomb Riley to loving memories of the Brevoort and Mouquin's. He takes a fling at answering the old question, "What is art," and says a good word for poor old much-lambasted Bouguereau. He registers his opinions of Congressmen; he tells the story of the gay knightly adventure of *The Masses;* he tells about Frank Harris on one page and about the town elocutionist back in Monroe, Wis., on the next. And ever and again he is back on his farm at Bethel, laying stone on the walls of the gallery he built for his own pictures and those of anyone who wishes to exhibit there, gossiping about the neighbor-lady who likes to shock the natives, recording that a little girl stopped sweeping the porch long enough to say "Hello, Mr. Young," noting the characteristics of birch, cedar, and hickory, and how the little lake is like a mirror and the clouds look like camels, and how soothing the country is—especially when it is only a couple of hours from New York and the Village—the Village whose glamor caught him in those earliest days when the artists were just discovering it, and holds him still.

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Art says of this book of his that it has "some dulness and some flashes." He is mistaken. To a dull mind or a cheap mind it would be all dull. To a mind like yours and mine there is not a dull sentence in it. For it doesn't come from a dull mind, but from a rich one. Not that "flashes" is particularly apt, either; but it is a meaty book; reading it is like eating fat chestnuts right out of the shell. It has salt but little of the sharper spices. The savor of it begins on the very first page: "Three things are worshipful—the Sun, giver of life; a Human Being who believes something worth while and will die for it if need be, and Art, the recreator of life." On the same page we can sample that blend of humor and social comment which we know in his drawings and so expect in his writings: "I look out over the hills this beautiful forenoon. It ought to be a day care free. Nevertheless, a taint of anxiety is in my mind. The rural postman has not brought the right letter. One with a check in it. . . . This is the blot that is ever before the beauty of the world. . . ."

As to style, Art Young has achieved that most difficult of all things to achieve in letters, utter simplicity—the ability to just tell the thing, not getting tangled up in words—what would not some of us give for it? Obvious as the differences are between these self-revelations and the letters of Vincent Van Gogh, Art Young has by this book also achieved a double fame; for with a mind as alert to social implications as Van Gogh's was to spiritual meanings, and with a gently ironic humor as valuable in its way as the Dutchman's agonizings, he, too, gives us a whole man confronting the world with indefeasible honesty.

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There is another thing that likens Art Young to Vincent Van Gogh. Readers of the Letters will remember how, in those early years of terrible struggle, Vincent repeatedly rejoiced that he had a "draftsman's fist." That is exactly what Art Young has. Van Gogh, who was excited by draftsmanship as other men are by wine, would have held Art Young in high esteem. When the great de-bunker, Time, gets in its work, Art Young will loom larger in the story of American art than he does now. The thirty-seven full-page illustrations in this book, and the scores and scores of smaller pictures that dot the pages as thick as wild strawberries in the grass in June, make an impressive exhibit.

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Cretan Civilization

THE PALACE OF MINOS AT KNOSSOS. By Sir Arthur Evans. Vol. II, Parts 1 and 2. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1928.

Reviewed by Hetty Goldman

WHOEVER feels himself the product of European civilization, whether he live on the far or hither side of the Atlantic, will read these volumes of Sir Arthur Evans, which continue the work begun by the publication of the first installment in 1921, with a peculiar thrill which the record of no other bygone people, no matter how brilliant, can evoke to quite the same degree. For here, on the sea-girt island of Crete, we have the first manifestations of a civilization which, however much it may have been stimulated in its incipiency and even in the course of its development by more powerful neighbors to the south and east, can with justice claim to be the first significant European civilization. Here is a variety of achievement, a gaiety of aspect, a daring, a curiosity about the visible world, an interest in material problems, and in general an emphasis on the profane which, in spite of all that Crete owed to Egypt—all that she learned by way of craft, all that she borrowed by way of convention and symbol,—makes almost a violent contrast with the culture of that country. It is not a mere matter of chance that Egypt lives for us chiefly in her tombs and temples, Crete in her palaces and lesser villas of the well to do class. In that is revealed the different accent of her civilization, the heart of her mystery.

Against the static of the Egyptian is the mobility of the Cretan, that almost quivering sense of life and vitality which makes even the most hasty and imperfect of the frescoes so exciting and stimulating to the imagination. Plato long ago summed up the peculiar quality of the Egyptians, whom Herodotus had already marvelled to discover "beyond measure religious," when he said, in discussing the traditional form of their art:

> They fixed and exhibited the patterns of them in their temples; and no painter or artist is allowed to innovate upon them, or to leave the traditional forms and invent new ones. To this day no alteration is allowed either in these parts or in music at all. And you will find that their works of art are painted or moulded in the same forms which they had ten thousand years ago—this is literally true and no exaggeration—their ancient sculptures are not a whit better or worse than the work of today, but are made with just the same skill.

The Egyptologists may with justice object that there is more variety in Egyptian art than Plato, bent upon pointing a moral, discovered, or at all events chose to reveal. Be that as it may, he nevertheless enunciated a general truth which it is well to bear in mind in attempting to estimate the individuality of the Cretan genius which maintained itself so triumphantly in the face of Egyptian culture and craftsmanship. Many times a pupil, Crete was never an imitator of Egypt or of any other country.

Sir Arthur Evans has put into these volumes far more than the title implies. They embody not merely the results of his own researches at Knossos and its immediate vicinity, carried on for a period of almost thirty years with only occasional interruptions, but a study of whatever material other sites of the island had yielded to complete the picture of Cretan civilization. And it is not with Crete alone that he is concerned, but Crete in relation, not only to the countries that surrounded the Mediterranean basin, but even to more distant lands connected with them by trade. In this way we are shown crude imitations of Cretan metal vases found along the route which the ancient trade in amber followed in coming from the north.

By virtue of his extraordinary knowledge of the archæology and history, the folklore and religion, of all ancient peoples, the author has at his disposal an almost bewildering mass of comparative material which it is not in his ardent and imaginative nature to use at all times with discretion. Evidently Sir Arthur is not a teacher; he has not been intimidated by the terrible receptiveness of the student, waiting with pencil poised to enter a "truth" in his notebook, into that cautious understatement which is the sole defense of the professor. He pours out the riches of his mind, he carries every suggestion to the ultimate possible conclusion, without at all times stopping to weigh the exact amount of probability involved. His evidence is sometimes dizzily pyramided, the suppositions of one paragraph forming the quasi-factual basis of the next. All this might be dangerous and misleading if the reader were not fully initiated into the nature of the evidence; it is for him to discriminate, to weigh, to accept, or reject what is offered with such prodigality. It is perhaps in the field of religion that the author seems to have carried his interpretations to the most imaginative lengths, and where it is frequently difficult to see that there is sufficient basis for his theories.

But if his conclusions seem to the reader at times unproven they rarely seem improbable. They are always along the lines of what might have been even if one would hesitate to join in a statement that so they were. He has an undeniable genius for the evocative phrase. The quarter of substantial private houses revealing a cultured and refined taste on the part of the substantial burghers who once inhabited them, is dubbed "The Quartier St. Germain." A building is found in the harbor of Knossos stored with portable altars and other paraphernalia usually connected with Cretan religion, and straightway it becomes "The House of the Propaganda" from which the Cretan gospel is spread to foreign lands such as the mainland of Greece, which the author believes suffered actual Cretan invasion and conquest; a theory hotly disputed by others who will admit only a cultural supremacy on the part of the island. The Little Palace built after a destructive earthquake seems to have an unusual number of subterranean pillar crypts dedicated to religious practices. Cannot this be an "Expiatory Foundation" erected to appease the chthonic deities who control seismic disturbances? Blackamoor soldiers appear on a fresco painting, and this leads to the supposition of Lybian mercenaries and African conquest. "The actual enlistment of black troops may be regarded as a symptom of conquest and colonial expansion on the African side and their employment on European soil is closely paralleled by the part played by 'Turcos' and Senegalese troops in more recent warfare." There is evidence that the princes of Knossos had a sacerdotal as well as a secular supremacy in the island, and so the painting of a man carried in a palanquin must needs depict the Cretan "Papa Re" borne aloft in the "Sedia Gestatoria." Examples could be multiplied, but these will suffice to illustrate the method. It is all immensely entertaining, immensely stimulating, so that in spite of the great mass of detail and technical discussion and a somewhat discursive style, the reading of the book is an exciting adventure to anyone at all familiar with the subject.

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To estimate the magnitude of the author's achievement one must realize that he was the first, though many have followed him since, to explore a period covering roughly some two and one half millenia, that is from about 3800-1200 B. C. While continuing to excavate, he succeeded at the same time, in a series of articles which appeared in the *Annual of the British School at Athens* and in other archæological journals, in ordering his material into coherent groups and in establishing, a task to which others contributed, a chronology for the island based largely on fixed dates in Egyptian dynastic history. Here Cretan vases found on Egyptian soil played a prepoderant rôle; and when the great processional frescoes of Knossos had been unearthed, the excavators realized that these were the self-same people who appeared on the wall-paintings in the tombs of the powerful generals of Thutmoses III. bearing precious vessels of Cretan form—among them the famous bull rhytons of the island—as gifts or tribute for the Pharaoh. Well may the author write with pride

> In the case of the Palace site of Knossos, not only the immense complication of the plan itself, with its upper as well as it lower stories, but the volume and variety of the relics brought to light—unrivalled perhaps in any equal area of the earth's surface ever excavated—have demanded for the working up of the material a longer time than was required for the actual excavation.

The era of Cretan greatness, as many will perhaps know, has been divided by Sir Arthur Evans into three periods — to which he gave the name Minoan after Minos, the great king and law-giver —each again subdivided into three epochs more or less distinctly defined. Indeed, intensive study, particularly of the pottery and frescoes, has led to an even more minute subdivision, but this need not occupy us here.

The first volume, which appeared some years ago, covered the Neolithic and Early Minoan periods during which the Cretans gradually emerge from a position hardly, if at all, superior to that of other inhabitants of the Ægean islands.

But anyone who wishes to appreciate the rôle that imaginative anticipation may legitimately play in archæological research, should follow the series of detailed investigations by which Sir Arthur sought and found the great roads which emanated from the Palace of Knossos, north, south, and east, and which linked it not only with an African port, but probably with Syria. Through this country influences as far afield as Mesopotamia may have reached the island. Of this we shall know more when the excavations now being carried on at Ur have been completed. By sea and land he follows the Cretan trader to the mainland of Greece until he establishes a connection between "Thebes and Thebes"—Bœotia and Egypt. That much of this is conjectural is frankly revealed both in the text and in the accompanying sketch maps; but given the established interrelations of the various countries, there is little doubt that the communications must have existed and that they followed approximately the lines that are indicated.

The second and third Late Minoan periods remain to be treated in detail, but from some points of view this second volume closes upon the most lasting contributions made by Crete to the cultural history of the world and more specifically of Europe. "Civilized as was the Late Minoan Age," says the author, "—the age of the greatest material prosperity, of the widest expansion of the Minoan race—brilliant as were its achievements in decorative works, and decided as was the advance in certain technical processes, the high level of art reached in the spacious days that had preceded it was hardly maintained beyond its incipient stage and never afterward regained." Before closing the volume it may be of interest to look once more at the frontispiece to the second part: the restoration in color of a painted stucco relief of the "Priest-King" of Knossos. Is it not possible to see, in spite of African dress and exotic headgear, in the freedom, the pride, and energy of his bearing something of the European whom a French poet has described as "not defined by race or by language or by custom, but only by desires and the amplitude of his will"?

Medicine as a Science

A SHORT HISTORY OF MEDICINE. By Charles Singer. New York: Oxford University Press. 1928. $3.

Reviewed by Edward C. Streeter

Associate Editor, *Annals of Medical Science*

"INTRODUCING medical principles to students and non-medical readers," this volume presents a brief, clear summary of the evolution of medical doctrines as held to-day. As a summary it is comparable with the compendiums of the ablest French epitomists. It is an account of medicine as a science, "the principles of medicine, rather than the details of practice," historically considered. A history of ideas, in short, philosophically handled and developed in such wise as to show how fertile ideas in the medical sciences were established and made regnant. It is a history purposely incomplete. Little space in these brief pages for fumblings and errors and unprofitable wanderings. Short shrift for reactionary and extravagant phases of medicine. Dr. Singer has rigorously deleted all biographical detail, all data regarding the status and education of medical men. He has taken the broken, discontinouous, disquieting story of manifold failures and made it whole and prosperously consecutive. For his present purpose he ignores a number of arid, irregular, horrid incidents in the dreary marches and counter-marches made by soldiers of the line. "Nous sommes tous des soldats de la science" once said Velpeau. We know of mistakes made by our commanders, but we do not discuss them in the line. Singer confines himself to the task of setting forth in progressive order all the sound and viable ideas produced in medical circles in the past twenty-five hundred years. A combined maze is Medicine! But not without a plan!

It is the outstanding merit of this work that the author cleaves to that which is good. He has discovered the great plan of medical progress and he makes all things subserve his purpose to share that discovery with us. The degradation of medicine in the monkish hostels of western Christendom is

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fell the healing art in the darkest ages, it is not our pleasure to explore. It is rather our interest to inquire: "What is medicine capable of in our own time and how did she come by her inherited stock of ideas?"

The structure of the organized medical sciences as existing to-day would seem to disavow her ancient struggle with such lusty adversaries as superstition, theurgy, and magic. Very well, let us accept Dr. Singer's leadership in that mood. Following the gleam, he will take us by quick stages from the origins of Greek medicine to the rebirth of science in northern Italy in the sixteenth century. Early and medieval medicine occupy, in this volume, about one quarter of the text,—a just proportion. The modern period, from 1700 to date, receives preponderant attention, as it should. The cell-theory, germ origin of disease, anæsthesia and its effect upon surgery, immunity, tropical medicine, and new physiological concepts call for extended discussion. The interpretation of collective medical data is dwelt upon at some length and then the volume closes with an interesting Epilogue—a glance at the tasks confronting the medical profession.

As a rapid non-technical statement of the gradual application of the rational method of observation and experiment in medicine Dr. Singer's work is the best that we have seen. A host of good illustrations admirably supplement the text. The make-up, as usual with Oxford Press publications, is beyond reproach.

The Moses of the Talmud

THE LIFE OF MOSES. By EDMOND FLEG. Translated from the French by STEPHEN HADEN GUEST. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1928.

Reviewed by CHARLES C. TORREY
Yale University

IT should be said at the outset that this is not the sort of biography to which we are accustomed in a series of "Great Men of Israel," or "Heroes of the Nations." It belongs to a very different class of literature, for it is a collection and artistic reshaping of the ancient Jewish legend, folklore, and mystical speculation concerning Moses, obtained chiefly from the Talmud, but also from other Rabbinical writings. Both author and translator have from their childhood been familiar with all this literature, and they know how to impart its peculiar flavor. Edmond Fleg is a poet as well as a scholar, and his translator who seems to share both qualities, has interpreted with perhaps not more loss than was inevitable. The English rendering employs the language of the Authorized Version in the comparatively small portion of the story derived from the Old Testament, and aims to retain its formal idiom throughout. In this the translator has done wisely. There are a few obscure passages, and even slips in the English employed, but as a whole the narrative is smooth and impressive. One or two selections will serve to show its nature.

The child Moses, at the end of his third year, has snatched the crown from Pharaoh's head, and is thereupon subjected to an ordeal, in the presence of the court and of the two prophets, Job and Balaam. "Let two dishes be presented to him," said Balaam: "Upon the one let there be scattered burning coals; upon the other pieces of gold. If he take the coal, thy crown is safe—he knows not what he does. But if he take the gold, fear him; he has understanding." . . . Moses grasped a lighted coal and carried it to his mouth. Wherefore, say our Rabbies, he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue all the days of his life.

Moses ascends to the seventh heaven to receive instruction, and must needs pass by the consuming fire of Sandalfon, angel of prayer, who weaves crowns for the Holy One, blessed be He. "When Moses saw Sandalfon, his eyes melted to tears and his soul to terror, and he would have thrown himself from the cloud-top into the abyss. . . . And when he had passed before Rigjion, who examines the secrets of the Eternal, and before Gelizur, who proclaims His decrees Moses entered the School of the Most High. There in semi-circles the angels are ranged, and the angel Zagzagel teaches them the Torah."

To those who wish to know something of the atmosphere of the Rabbinical literature, with its allegories, its fantastic imaginings, and its many high spiritual conceptions, this "Life" is to be recommended.

To My Black Kitten

I

TO you who vex me while I write
And at my pen do gently bite,
To you I will this verse indite.

It seems to me when I am dead
And centuries passed above my head

That I myself might think in trees
And sculpture nature's majesties
Carved in rock and changing seas.
I could conceive of all of these—
One of those angels that rehearse
Their dramas in the universe—
Whose moods are days and whose great hands
Embodied are in seas and lands.

Yes, I could be without a doubt
One of those angels that greatly shout
Planning tall hills and sunsets out.
But only God's Mother getting to sleep
The Eternal Babe would think to make
A little foolish thing like you!
Such are the things that mothers do.

Sometimes when in angelic skies
The great antiphonals arise
Of archangelic melodies,
I'll say, "On earth and far away
Those are hills that last a day."

And when with glorious battle shout
They shake great Heaven inside out
I'll say "On earth and very far
That cry turns to a falling star."
But when through praises, prayers, and pities
I hear the rhymes of ancient ditties,
Nursery songs to please God's Son
In Heaven the very Littlest One
Then will I say "Those are the kitties."

In you a sign to us is given
To show that there is fun in Heaven.

II

Before Abraham was, I Am—

Upon the knees of His great Dam
Pretended that he was a Lamb
And she would call Him "Little Lamb."
No sooner were they made than they
Straightway did begin to play.
While playing still His innocent game
How innocent to earth He came.
Him—playing still the Lamb of God
They caught and bruised with many a rod—
And killed Him for His lovely game.

Then earth did heave, the sky did rock
And Heaven itself received the shock.

He who loves not innocent play
He cannot breathe on Judgment Day.
Earth will not come to end at last
Through cataclysms strange and vast
But by exquisite deep games,
Salvation just by changing names.

The deepest power that we know
Is "Heigh Ho my Deary O"

Ring games are the fiery pit
In which perish the unfit.

Nothing so disturbs the devil
As the sound of innocent revel.

Mary and Jehovah will disclose
The funny things that Jesus does.

And tall archangels hear those things
And rustle their amused great wings.

When God comes in His great state
The foolish shall confound the great.

As darling children charm away
All that is less sweet than they
We'll be saved by God's sweet play.

And earth shall come to an end at last
With laughter rich and warm and vast.

III

To you who vex me while I write
And at my pen do gently bite,
To you I will this verse indite.

All through my flesh and through and through
The Holy Child enjoys you too.

I laugh to Him and He to me
Enraptured with your infancy.

My heart knows well that you and He
Gamboled together at God's knee.

God Himself has not refused
To be exquisitely amused.

He loves you for your lovely fur
And listens closely for your purr.

Yes, Heaven is exquisite with fun
The laughter of the Three-in-One—

When they behold the Heavenly Boy
Playing games of childish joy.

Playing he is a Happy Door
With welcome for the weak and poor.

Playing he is a Loaf of Bread
By which the frail are comforted.

Playing He is the Living Tree
Danced around by you and me!

All through my flesh—yes through and through
The Holy Child enjoys you too.

To a Dog

I

IF there is no God for thee
Then there is no God for me

If He sees not when you share
With the poor your frugal fare,

Does not see you at a grave,
Every instinct bred to save;

As if you were the only one
Believing in a resurrection;

When you wait, as lovers do,
Watching till your friend comes true;

Does not reverence when you take
Angry words for love's sweet sake;

If his eye does not approve
All your faith and pain and love;

If the heart of justice fail
And is for you of no avail;

If there is no heaven for thee
Then there is no heaven for me.

II

If the Lord they tell us of
Died for men yet loves not love,

If from out His Paradise
He shuts the innocent and wise,

The gay, obedient, simple, good,
The docile ones, of friendly mood,

Those who die to save a friend
Heavenly faithful to the end;

If there is no cross for thee
Then there is no cross for me.

III

If its boughs reach not so high
That they bowed star and sky,

If its roots are not so sound
That they cleave the heavy ground,

If it thrills not through all Nature
Plunged through every living creature,

If its leaves do not enmesh
Every bit of groaning flesh,

If it strike not its mighty spur
Through fang and claw and tooth and fur
Piercing tree and earth and stone,
Then indeed I stand alone.

Nothing less than this can save
Me, from out my fleshly grave,

Me, in whom such jungles are
Where the beasts go out to war.

If there is no God for thee
Then there is no God for me.

ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH.

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The Bowling Green

Pulling Seaweed

I SUPPOSE it is valuable, for intellectual reasons, that a man's life should be as much of a paradox as possible. It has always amused me to observe that though all my best instincts are for lethargy, quietism, postponement and concentration, I usually find myself in a hurry. What an accurate word is *distracted,* for if I pause to examine my mind I can usually find it subject to various diverse tensions. Perhaps that is well: like the outer ligatures of a spider's web these help to keep the central gossamers of the spirit from collapsing into a silky tangle. And though theoretically I abhor the business of being in a hurry, yet I must be honest enough to confess that often it is in that condition I find myself happiest. And how, otherwise, would the occasional interludes of exquisite indolence be so perfect? Evidently there is some deep necessity for life to be as full of opposites as possible.

During an autumn of exceptional hurry my mind has often turned back to an afternoon of amazing peace. It was in early September, on a beach on Long Island Sound. First let me explain that there is some notable virtue in owning a small frontage on actual tide-water, because to feel some proprietory right in the perpetual movement of the tides seems to put one in relation with huge things. The whole turn and tension of the cosmos is apparent there on your own shore; and that of itself is enough to keep you aware of enormity. On this drowsy afternoon, while the family sprawled on the sand or capered among the boulders, I was thigh-deep in warm golden water, pulling up masses of seaweed. Air and water were so exactly the same temperature that it was almost impossible to say how much of you was in and how much out. In the clarity of those green and tawny shallows thick clumps of weed wavered softly, and when, after strong pulling, they came up from their rocky fixture, they crackled and seethed in the hands. The water, running out through all that tangle of rubbery cells and fibres, makes a most curious spongy hissing. Those masses of seaweed were full of innumerable small five-pointed stars. September, it appears, is kindergarten time among the echinoderms, and every tress of seaweed carries in it dozens of baby starfish, perhaps a quarter of an inch across. One could not help believing that there was some considerable meaning in this—they were like tiny pentameter epigrams. But on such wise afternoons one does not explore too fiercely for meanings. One observes and is content.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

The chief danger in being so busy, and consequently so absorbed in one's own notions, is that one forgets that others are equally under pressure, equally absorbed. And in making liberal allowance for one's own preoccupation he forgets to make adequate obeisance to other people's. I suppose that what I am really leading up to is the annual Apology with which the Bowling Green always ends its calendar year: apology for letters unanswered, duties neglected, stamps unreturned, manuscripts unread. Apologies, of course, are always impossible; there is no apology for anything. At this very moment, trying to get on with these paragraphs, I was interrupted by the telephone, and was indignant to find it a call for Stella, our cheerful Polish maid; and then I remembered that Stella also means a star and has her own necessities to twinkle. So I suppose that in the thickest tangles of daily seaweed these youthful starfish are lurking. Abbé Dimnet, in his charming book, *The Art of Thinking* (an admirable New Year's gift for anyone who is at all interested in the excitements of the mind, and particularly for teachers or parents), retells the familiar old story of the Spanish sailors becalmed off the mouth of the Amazon and dying of thirst. "They could not believe the natives signalling that the water all round their ship was good to drink and they had only to throw down their buckets."

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

I was amused the other day, re-reading Leonard Merrick's "Conrad in Quest of His Youth" which I had not read for some fourteen years to find that his hero who thought himself so elderly and went wistfully to try to revive early romances, was actually 37. The comedy was that when I first read that book I supposed it quite natural that a man of 37 should consider himself pretty elderly; whereas I know now that 37 (or even 38) is only the beginning of the real fun. No one reckons age by years anyhow, but by receptiveness to new ideas. Even if one always marks the end of a calendar by making apologies for one's errors, it is not in any ignorance of the unlikelihood that those errors can be mended. Abbé Dimnet very wisely counsels us to try to cultivate and intensify those of our moods which we know to be most essentially *us*:—

> There is in us a stratum more sensitive than the rest, which we know and where we can go at will. A behaviorist would say that the inevitability of the response from that stratum in our consciousness proves that it is biological, but all I want to say is that we know from experience that the response is sure. If we live a great deal with ourselves we increase our personality, and if we revive certain facts or periods, or phases of feeling in our lives, we heighten our receptivity.
>
> Our life with its peaks—which we know—of sentiment, effort, nobility, or increased intelligence, is a veritable mine of evocative moods. A few minutes' leisure is enough to replace ourselves in such moods, and no sooner are we conscious of them than the phosphorescence of intuitiveness begins. Poets know it well. Their own experience, sometimes woefully restricted in appearance, is the constant support of their inspiration. They, as well as artists are remarkably like children, and have never broken the thread binding the various periods of their lives together, as men living in the world, and for the world, will do.

But alas, as every student of *moeurs* is aware, it is usually just after visiting those upper slopes of the spirit, and resolving to build a bungalow there, that our worst landslides of conduct go roaring down into a crevasse.

It is odd to think, concerning so wise and winning and unpretentious a little book as Abbé Dimnet's, that most of those who might most benefit by it will never hear of it. It does not clench its brows in contortion like the Penseur of the august Rodin (that old faker). One reason, incidentally, why I now suspect that Rodin wasn't really so very much of an artist is because when I was twenty-two I thought him so tremendous. I suspect that if at 38 you still feel about things as you did at 22, something is wrong.

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So we end the year's notebook as usual, in the frenzy and fragrance of Just Before Christmas, with the Apologies of the Season—apology for occasional eruption from duty, for slips of temper and imperfect cadences in prose. You will remember, I hope, the sagest and most perennial of all human sayings—*Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.* But remember too that a pen is not a jade in harness. It is a feather, lifted on the wind.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The Canadian Nation

A HISTORY OF CANADA. By CARL WITTKE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1928.

Reviewed by W. P. M. KENNEDY
University of Toronto

IT is always a difficult undertaking to give within a single volume anything like an adequate view of the historical development of a nation, and, as a general rule, the task is all the more difficult for a foreign scholar. When then an historian from the United States attempts such a work for Canada he is faced with these initial handicaps. In addition, because there are so many likenesses between the two nations which are really differences, so many traditions which are apparently common, but have in fact diverged in actual life, it is always possible to make grave errors in interpretation. Finally, Canadian history is complicated in spite of its superficial simplicity and there is always the risk of missing the true meaning of the varied forces which have made the Dominion of Canada.

It is a fine story, shot through with romance and poetry, with faith and despair, with dreams and disappointments, with comedy and tragedy. Here are colonial projects in which humble settlers rub shoulders with the great statesmen of Europe. Here are bold navigators and voyagers and illiterate savages. Here France and England fought out their age-long duel. Here the American Revolution left an indelible imprint in the Loyalists and in a mistaken attempt to prevent a similar disruption which in turn issued in the Canadian Rebellions. Here Austinian sovereignty and mercantalist theory met the persistent attacks of colonial political reformers and colonial fiscal autonomists. Here were solved the relationships between cabinet government and federalism, between nationhood and empire. Here a frontier slowly moved to the Pacific driven forward by the faith and vision of the railway builders. Here have been dramatic developments in economic life. Here has been that ghastly test of war for a young nation sixty years old: an historical canvas rich in human experience.

Professor Wittke has then undertaken to tell a story rich in accomplishments, shot through with problems, pregnant with snares, and he has carried it out with eminent success. His book is no mere *tour de force,* for he has lectured with distinction for many years on Canadian history. He knows the literature and sources of his subject as a scholar and he approaches his purpose with an objective and judicial mind. We may say at once that his volume will not only be of great value to readers in the United States but that citizens of Canada will do well to read it and to see themselves through foreign eyes.

Professor Wittke writes with modesty in presentation and on the whole with a fine sense of proportion. Perhaps he is weakest in the history of the Maritime Provinces which do not receive from him their due weight in treatment and their rightful place in influence—a fault, however, which he shares with many Canadian writers. However that may be, he moves with extraordinary security amid his material and his obvious intimate acquaintance with it rescues his book from the dangers of mere historical description and from labored prose. It is true that there is no fine writing in the book, and that a sense of restraint seems evident even when moments of historical drama are under review. On the other hand the style is clear and practical and the reader can follow the developments with interest and with ease.

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In addition it is of exceptional value to watch a foreign scholar attempting to get beneath the surface and to disclose something of Canada's cultural life, its nationhood and civilization. In this connexion, Professor Wittke writes frankly, but with courtesy and dignity. He cannot, for example, but see how influences from the United States have worked into Canadian life, but he strikes a fine balance in estimating their import and importance. Where the superficial writer would see peaceful penetration and deduce political significance, where the inexpert observer would find something to glory over in the apparent extension of the importance of his own country, Professor Wittke rightly observes "inevitable" likenesses as "continental" phenomena due to common cultural, economic, and geographical factors. At the same time he has fully grasped the meaning of Canada's unmistakable foundations in its own political integrity.

Most remarkable perhaps is the author's skill in dealing with the years since 1914. It is not too much to say that his success here is remarkable. Without offence, but with courage and judgment he has presented the tangled political, social, and economic history in chapters of singular objectivity. I do not mean to imply that I agree with all his interpretations; what I do wish to emphasize is his fine effort in writing contemporary history.

Finally the book is not only a scholarly and welcome addition to an excellent and beautiful series, but it is symptomatic. Every day we hear of wider teaching of Canadian history in the United States, and each year brings an increasing number of scholars to Canadian archives. These phenomena are of inestimable importance. Professor Wittke, thank goodness, has nothing to say of "the unguarded line," of "blood will tell" of "common inheritances"; but his book itself speaks much for that community of learning which knows no frontiers and it is a valuable contribution to that structure of mutual knowledge and understanding which is the best of all guarantees of enduring friendships between two nations under permanent and inviolate political separation.

"What rich associations," says *John O'London's Weekly*, "surrounded the old watermill at Grantchester, Cambridgeshire, which was recently destroyed by fire. It dated from 1280, and was one of the most valued possessions of Merton College, Oxford. Chaucer knew it and mentioned it in his works. It is believed to have inspired Tennyson to write 'The Miller's Daughter.' Rupert Brooke lived only a few score yards away, and in his famous poem, 'Grantchester,' refers to the mill's literary associations."

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Books of Special Interest

Black Africans Have Souls

THE SOUL OF THE BANTU. By W. C. WILLOUGHBY. New York. Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1928. $5.

Reviewed by HARTLEY B. ALEXANDER
Scripps College

THERE are three publics for this book. First is the public from which the author springs: missionaries into Africa. It is for these that the book is primarily composed, one judges; and the author enlists every sympathy when he pleads for an understanding of the mind and faith of the native on the part of each man or woman who goes seeking converts. By understanding, moreover, he does not mean a glow of pious benevolence engendered by his calling in the missionary's mind, but honest and hard and down-to-the-bottom study of the black man's life, mental as well as physical; and his book is first of all his contribution to solid understanding, justified by long years in the African jungle during which he was devoted not only to winning the natives to his truth, but to discovering theirs, and he tells us that a service rendered to King Khama of the Bamangwato opened for him doors of information sealed to most Europeans: his text substantiates this information. For the departing missionary this book is a kind of life-work's testament, and one must deeply respect the man who gives his life to missions with such a sense of obligation as Dr. Willoughby's: "Whatever else I doubt, I am sure of this: that he who regards the religious ideas with which this book teems as the incoherent babblings of disordered fancy, will miss whatever of value they contain, and that he who regards them as responses of the human spirit to the Eternal Spirit that broods over humanity, can never willingly lie idle in a world where they exist." There can be no slur upon a missionary with this spirit.

The second public which cannot neglect the volume is of those concerned for the sciences of man, for anthropology, sociology, comparative religion, and all that has to do with the roots of human cultures. It is a bit odd that these men whose attitude is often antithetical to that of the missionary should so inevitably be brought into coöperation with the latter. In the libraries of anthropology the works of missionaries, travellers, and the professional students of men form the core, and of these three elements it is the missionary who has provided the most outstanding contribution. Dr. Willoughby's volume will almost certainly stand as a, and perhaps the, primary authority on African cults and beliefs: every page is thick with information, which no student can ignore and no library dispense with.

The third class to whom the volume must appeal is composed of the ubiquitously curious, for naturally such a book teems with information which a dealer would class as "curious," answering a kind of appetite which as yet, I think, no psychologist has analyzed. It is rather regrettable that this is all that can be said for the literary and humanistic aspects of a work which is otherwise of so evident a value. But it is just there: if you *like* Brand's "Antiquities" or Tylor's "Primitive Culture" or Frazer's "Golden Bough" (which rises a level, structurally), that is, if you like this kind of reading which passes in pick-and-pass fashion from detail to detail, all relevant enough, but all of detail none the less, then the "Soul of the Bantu" is for you. But if you are seeking for something far more rare (Miss Kingsley attained it in "West African Studies," Lang hit it off repeatedly), the kindling of an imaginative understanding, alert with the reality of the facts caught up, then this book will disappoint, and the reader will weary all too readily of the anecdotal collections which really form the matter of the chapters. It is not that wisdom is absent; the author has understanding; and perhaps it is quite too much to ask of a book that is meant for instruction, and certainly is instructive, that it add this other quality, possible, but wholly rare.

Of the content one need only say that it conforms to the type set by Tylor and Frazer, with the addition that so greatly it is first-hand. And there is many a sharp lesson to be learned from it: "I have heard natives declare that the thought of meeting their ancestors in the other world keeps them from committing what they think the grosser sins of murder and witchcraft." In this text alone there is reply to whole textbooks of superficial sociology, college-taught; and another kind of pause is given by the author's comment: "However terribly the history of Africa has been disfigured by cattle-lifting, slave-raiding, and the slaughter of servitors of the dead, it is still more terrible that such deeds have been done, time out of mind, in the name of the highest loyalties that the doers knew." But is it "still more terrible"? Just there is the issue which is before mankind now as it has been through the ages: whether ignorance is the greater terror, or treachery, founded in a denial of the possibility of any humanity. "They who worship little tin gods," continues our author, "always grow little tin souls." But is the metal all-important? or the fact that of their own motion the black Africans worship gods and bugaboos, and of their own natures create and adhere to loyalties? and therein that they have human souls?

Missions in Japan

JAPAN IN THE WORLD OF TO-DAY. By ARTHUR J. BROWN. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company. 1928. $3.75.

DR. BROWN'S new volume is a characteristic product of the missionary attitude toward the problems of Asia, and as such may interest even those to whom the missionary attitude appeals not at all. It is in that sense—as an expression of the missionary mind—authoritative; for Dr. Brown has had many years' experience in the administration of foreign missions from this country and has repeatedly visited the countries which are most favored by American Christianizers.

The book contains eighteen chapters of narrative exposition on the subject of contemporary Japan, and four of these are directly concerned with the Christian missions and the native religions they have to combat. The other fourteen chapters are ostensibly concerned with Japanese character, internal problems, and foreign policy, but in no respect can the consideration given them be described as objective. Again and again the moral and religious prejudices of Christianity are permitted to obtrude upon the analyses of exclusively political problems. The whole book reposes upon the extraordinary assumption that the progress of the peoples of the East will be assured by their Christianization, the substitution of a new religion for the old.

But even if we concede that this fundamental thesis is defensible—that our theological and ethical system, in short, is superior to any other in the world and a prerequisite to progress—Dr. Brown's book still does not pass muster as an adequate presentation of the condition of modern Japan. It contains quantities of statistical information, but in every case of controversial interest save only one, the author judiciously inclines to approval of the acts of the Japanese Government. Thus he does a masterly job of whitewashing the Japanese course in Korea, remarking incidentally that he deplores the Japanese excesses, but pointing out that European nations have frequently equalled them. We cannot avoid the suspicion that in this Dr. Brown is governed by a desire to avoid offending the Japanese—a salutary desire which has informed much of the missionary endeavor in those Asiatic countries which possess strong, resolute governments.

The one instance in which Dr. Brown does not approve of the Japanese course of action is the case of Shantung. Here he expresses a guarded disapproval, accompanied by a doubt that Japan's China policy is analogous to the American Monroe Doctrine. His remarks on this subject are worth quoting as a characteristic, if astonishing, exhibition of the missionary tendency to see everything in the rosiest light.

> As a matter of fact (says Dr. Brown) our country does not interfere with the internal affairs of any other nation in this hemisphere. It demands no concessions from them, appoints no advisers, and stations no soldiers within their territories. The American policy is that each nation should be left absolutely free to work out its own destiny.

As a definition of the theory and practice of the Monroe Doctrine in the past three decades this takes the cake. Obviously such flagrant misstatements are due neither to ignorance nor to a desire to deceive, but merely to a charming trustfulness of temperament and a belief that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. It is clear that a work performed in this spirit is worthless either as history or as journalism.

The internal problems of Japan are subjected to treatment which even more unmistakably displays the limitations of the missionary mind. In his chapter on Social Problems Dr. Brown devotes one page to agrarian questions and the condition of the agricultural mass of the Japanese people, five pages to industrial conditions and the awakening of the proletariat (half of this space occupied by a discussion of suicide), three to the position and education of women, and *thirteen pages* to prostitution.

A General Complex

THE INFERIORITY FEELING. By WILLIAM S. WALSH, M.D. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1928.

Reviewed by JOSEPH JASTROW

DR. WALSH has simplified the reviewer's task by producing so plainly a useful book on an important topic. The thesis is stated simply and clearly, the matter is well organized; it remains only to recommend the product. The author establishes direct contact with his reader, the layman, by assuming little knowledge of the subject, but adaptability to acquire it, and by the fair assumption that we are all interested as we are all exposed to the inferiority feeling. Only the extreme victims of an inferiority complex are abnormal. They differ from the well-adjusted individual in susceptibility to a set of influences that everyone must face. The picture of inferiority includes the several varieties produced mainly by the social relation, but equally by dower of family and race, by fate of occupation, by the play of the rivalries of social standards, from small-town jealousies to cosmopolitan climbings. Gazing too steadily at the upper rounds of any inaccessible ladder induces an inferiority feeling.

The centre of that feeling is a personal focus. No emphasis of the social bearing should obscure this vital fact. The management of sensitiveness in the child is the clue to the avoidance of social inferiority later on. Emotional control must be well handled in childhood to prepare for facing the social and occupational situation that unfortunately is likely to intensify a handicap resulting from a bad start. Another group of emotional traits which may be relied upon to offset and prevent maladjustment are those that relate to self-assertion; finding the mean between forwardness and backwardness, between too great hesitation and a cocksure decision, between a proper discipline in correcting the lessons of experience, and a hampering sense of guilt or unworthiness. The sensitive individual is the natural candidate for the inferiority feeling. Unwise management leads to undue subserviency. The individual taught early to stand on his own feet is likely to face others with assurance and consideration. The inferiority "feeling" is a much better term than inferiority "complex" in that it emphasizes the large bearing of this relation in all normal developments. Dr. Walsh has done a good piece of work in making this topic comprehensible for the layman. His survey is broad, his position safe and sane, his advice sound.

Political democracy aims to establish an equality feeling as the basis of contact of fellow citizens. It doesn't go very far because we are all so much more intimately persons than citizens. Psychology has a better chance than politics to direct endeavors in wholesome social relations.

Physician and Patient

Edited by DR. L. E. EMERSON

Intelligent laymen as well as practicing physicians will find much food for thought in this collection of nine lectures recently delivered at the Harvard Medical School by outstanding authorities on the relation between the physician and his patients. The thought running through them all is that the patient as a whole must be considered and his mind taken into account as well as his body. The layman will be particularly interested in such essays as "The Significance of Illness," "Human Nature and Its Reaction to Suffering," and "Attention to Personality in Sex Hygiene." $2.50 a copy.

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A Letter from France

By Abel Chevalley

THE Goncourt Prize has just been awarded to M. Constantin Weyer for his novel "Un Homme Se Penche sur Son Passé." I was, I believe, among the first to call attention to his work, for I was long ago convinced that he deserved the recognition which he has now received. But how spectacular is the northern Canada of his prize-novel! In introduces us to a cowboy who reads Pascal, and is chock full of metaphysical problems. The sentimental anecdote that binds together his vivid descriptions is of the flimsiest order. The spirit of Jack London hovers around the whole performance.

This is not the first time that the Goncourt prize has been awarded, not to what is most deserving in a given author, but to what passes for the moment as "modern" in the minds of the multitude of this country, however antiquated and worn-out in others.

I do not believe in literary prizes. They do more harm than good, at least in France. They encourage sensationalism and mercantilism. Literary talent is no longer in danger of being left unrecognized. It overflows. It is as plentiful as turnips in Beauce, and the demand at least equals the supply. When old Goncourt endowed his ten-member Academy, the situation was very different. He wanted the young dare-devils to have their chance. Now, since the war, dare-devils have been constantly at a premium, and we are getting sick of devilry. The only artists that are not encouraged are those who have the courage to learn their business. Flaubert, Anatole France, the Goncourts themselves served a long apprenticeship before fame and money came their way.

Genius is not necessarily revelation; it is also work and patience. In order to be faithful to the Goncourt spirit, the Goncourt Prize ought to go, not to the most revolutionary, but to the most traditional of our young novelists. They are the only real dare-devils of the so-called "modern generation."

What is really "modern" in French contemporary literature? The word itself is ambiguous. In its literal sense it means "of to-day." Etymologically speaking, our grandmothers are as modern as ourselves. They belong to their generation, which has just as good a right to exist in this world, and make a splash, too, as our own. And in their time they were probably not only modern, but modernist. In that sense all contemporary writings are modern, even the epic poems and five-act rhymed tragedies which provincial academies are still crowning with laurels. Even Nobel Prize literature is modern.

But from the same Latin origin is also derived *mode*, i. e., manner, or fashion. A modern novel is not only novel, but it is fashionable. It has a manner of being novel which makes it fashionable. On the other hand, if it is too widely accepted and fails to cause surprise, to come as something of a shock, it ceases at once to be modern. We are in a labyrinth.

In his "Initiation à la Littérature d'Aujourd'hui" (Renaissance du Livre), M. E. Bouvier does not quite find the way out. He is so systematic and cocksure that one is tempted to challenge him at every turn. But his notion of what has been considered as modern, say since the war, is strictly consonant with the one aspect of modernity that has been the most evident in contemporary literature, that of *surprise*, *shock*, *discordance*. Guillaume Apollinaire used to say: *La surprise est la grand ressort de l'esprit nouveau* (surprise is the mainspring of the new spirit). Hence the vogue of unexpected metaphors: dry, crooked, pungent mannerisms falling like bomerangs on the reader's mind—inexplicable happenings, sub-conscious, marvelous, unconnected—premeditated audacities of thought and expression. But the effect of surprise is surprisingly short-lived. We have got to the point at which we expect the unexpected. The element of shock, being discounted, is destroyed. You cannot petrify people already turned into pillars of salt.

What is the consequence? The word *modern* rapidly ceases to be a synonym of *jarring*, *startling*, or *lurid*. There is a noticeable movement of public taste towards those writers who, eschewing the element of shock or surprise, have been content to work slowly, before and since the war, on strongly coherent themes, producing closely-knit series of volumes, hardly noticed when they first appeared, but now coming into their own.

Marcel Proust was one of these men. His industry hastened his death, and his death, his fame. But it is no exaggeration to say, with the good German critic Curtius, that, even if he were still alive, his work would mark a turning point in the history of the novel. Roger Martin du Gard, author of "Les Thibaut," who was the main subject of one of my recent letters, is another case in point. And if you have not yet heard of René Béhaine, you will soon be asking yourself why he also has become modern without trying to be discordant. He began, twenty years ago, his "Histoire d'une Société" and has recently published the sixth volume under the title, "Avec les Yeux de l'Esprit" (Grasset). The original first volume, "Les Nouveaux Venus," is now out of print. It bore the imprint of Fasquelle. Bernard Grasset bought the copyright, together with the remains of the first edition. It is now being reprinted. Success came with the fourth volume. René Béhaine has some fanatical admirers, among whom Léon Daudet, a great discoverer of hidden treasure. I do not share their enthusiasm. René Béhaine is too portentous for my taste. But let us give him his due: he sets a great example of conscience and thoroughness. His province is the generation of 1900, and especially the catholic and provincial girl of France.

The progressive weakening of the element of surprise in what is considered as *modern* has had another effect. We are not following with a renewed admiration the work of men like Jean Schlumberger, who are silently recasting what was once called the novel of introspection. Of the five stories contained in "Les Yeux de Dix-huit Ans" (N. R. F.), one, "Au Bivouac," is a triumph of technique, and I cannot adequately describe the sense both of mystery and mastery which it arouses, even in a blasé reader of fiction like myself. It has been hailed as a masterpiece by Edmond Jaloux, an excellent critic, and himself a novelist of no mean distinction. Edmond Jaloux has been granted "Le Grand Prix de Littérature," that is, the highest award that the Academy can confer on a living writer, pending his election. "La Branche Morte" (Plon) contains three long stories, written, one in 1924, the second in 1911, the third in the author's youth, about 1900. The development of his talent, the progress of his harmonious career, are epitomized in "La Branche Morte." I entirely share his admiration for the sort of work which the name of Jean Schlumberger represents.

Jacques de Lacretelle's "L'Ame Cachée" is also one of those books where the hidden soul of men and things is, as it were, illuminated from within, independently of external and surprising invention. It consists of four tales, one of which, "La Mart d'Hippolyte," deserves to become, and is in a fair way of becoming, a classic. Lacretelle's novels "Silberman" and "La Bonifas," and especially the latter, are with good reason considered as absolutely sure to survive as models of the French novel in this decade.

"Le Miroir à Deux Faces," by Jacques Boulanger (N. R. F.), bears a felicitous and significant title, which could be equally well applied to several other novels published this year (for instance, "Climats," by André Maurois, and "Blèche," by Duné La Rochelle). They are all "double-faced mirrors," where the same people, the same events, are seen through two opposed minds and temperaments.

As often as not, they consist of conjugal diaries, where the refracted images of the wife in her husband's mind and the husband in his wife's heart are successively presented. The situations are not new, but the *technique* of these diptychs has been surprisingly refreshed and renewed. For lightness of touch, vivacity, agreement, give me Jacques Boulanger. The two faces of his mirror close upon each other, bright and fit, like those hinged writing tablets, waxed on the inner side, which ancient poets have used and loved. And that, again, is *modern* work without modern aggressiveness.

Gerhardt Hauptmann's new novel, "Wanda" (Fischer Verlag) is, according to reports from Berlin, creating considerable of a sensation in Germany. It is the story of a sculptor, a man sprung from the people who has attained to great success, and who in the provincial town where honors are about to be bestowed upon him, meets a young girl model, member of a traveling show. The girl, completely soulless, enslaves the man, and works his ruin through his passion. The story is told with skill.

CAPITAL AND FINANCE IN THE AGE OF THE RENAISSANCE. By Richard Ehrenberg. Translated by H. M. Lucas. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1928. $4.50.

The sixteenth century appears in history as a broad economic and political hiatus which separates—and yet joins—the Middle Ages and modern times. Looked at in the perspective which four hundred years have given us, its very incoherence is its most eloquent characteristic. Politically considered, its greatest importance consists in the final supremacy of the nation state and the absolute monarchy. Its economic concomitants are the wider area of exchanges, the growth of the great bourses, the expansion of the money economy—in brief, the commercial revolution. In these enormous processes there were few participants equal in importance to the members of the House of Fugger.

Jakob Fugger II supplied the funds with which Philip V bought his election as Holy Roman Emperor. The Fugger family financed princes, established extensive foreign agencies and branches, carried on enormous transactions (for that time) in international exchanges, participated in the business of the bourses, and lost most of its collective fortune through the series of Spanish state bankruptcies. Dr. Ehrenberg's account of the Fuggers and their times is scholarly without being tedious, and penetrating without too meticulous a consideration of alternatives and potentialities. While written chiefly for historians, it should prove to be a most valuable economic treatment of the sixteenth century for lay readers of history.

"A thousand numbered copies of an important work on art, in two volumes, has lately been published," says the London *Observer*. "It is 'Storia dei Pittori Italiani dell' Ottocento,' by Enrico Somarè. (Milan: L'Esame. Edizione d'Arte Moderno. Lire 700.) There are hundreds of fine reproductions, some in color, and the clear type and sober magnificence of the leather binding make it a welcome addition to the library. Signor Somarè gives a lucid account of the different regional schools of art in Italy during the nineteenth century, and his biographical notices of the artists are helpful to students of a period too little known."

Leon Daudet, who as a child was frequently in the home of Victor Hugo, and who, after the death of the novelist, helped to class and examine the notes and papers left to his heirs and executors, has written a brief but excellent essay upon him in his new volume entitled, "Les Pèlerins d'Emmaus" (Paris: Grasset). The life of Victor Hugo was of so dramatic a character as to hold as much interest as romance. Raymond Escholier, Keeper of the Victor Hugo Museum in the Place des Vosges, has conveyed much of its picturesque quality, for all that he is confining himself to straight biography, in a life he has just issued under the title, "La Vie Glorieuse de Victor Hugo" (Paris: Plon). It is a seasoned, judicious study, of genuine value.

The fourth volume of "Cose Viste" (Treves), by Ugo Ojetti, has recently appeared. Like the books that preceded it, it is full of vivid incident and brilliant description, and its reminiscences of such figures as Carducci, Matilde Serao, and Count Volpi, to mention but a few, are rich in interest.

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What French Children Read

By Louis Morgan Sill

THERE is no lack of children's books in France. Look at Hatchette's catalogues, and then the smaller ones of Larousse, Garnier Frères, Mame, Flammarion, and you will turn away confused as you do from our American lists of juveniles.

First, there are all the French classics, bound as gift books, with and without illustrations, or as books for school prizes, an immense proportion of these, and at prices to suit everybody's purse; then a large number of the best later and even modern books for the older children; and for the youngest children many copies of what the French publishers call "albums," consisting chiefly of pictures accompanied by a paragraph or two of very simple text relating adventures of children or very often the domestic animals. There are alphabet books and trick books of various sorts, and there are books so cheap that they consist of the bound pages of a badly printed magazine done up in a gaudy cover, which depressing productions can only be found in department stores.

French publishers issue collections of books in uniform bindings and call them "Bibliothèques." Hachette, the most important publisher of children's books, issues a "Bibliothèque Rose" which is the best known of them all. The subjects in this series are carefully chosen, and range from Don Quixote and the immortal tales of Charles Perrault to Captain Mayne-Reid. The binding is a cheerful red, and the books are illustrated and well made, and, according to the paper and cloth, can be bought for eight francs or thirteen francs (about thirty-five or fifty-five cents). Hachette also has a Blue, Green, and White "Bibliothèque," with modern authors included.

Jules Verne is still very widely read, and no one has taken his place. The list of his books is very long. There are the agreeable tales of the Comtesse de Ségur, still beloved of young French children, and of Mlle Zenaïde Fleuriot, whose "Le Petit Chief de Famille" everybody still reads, along with many other stories by the same author. There are books of science made easy, many books of voyages and adventures, mechanical books for boys, books for small children to color, and all the usual things which we know in America.

Among the most amusing and widely sold books for quite young children are the famous series of the "Bécassine" stories (Gautier et Languereau). These consist largely of funny illustrations by Pinchon with a text running around and among them, by Caumery, relating the adventures of a good-natured and stupied Breton housemaid and nurse in Paris and elsewhere. Her foolishness is lovable, and she adores the children. Benjamin Rabier's "Clémentine," who is a humanized goose living on a farm, is funny and popular.

In the schools, lyceums, and colleges books are given very extensively for prizes, and include a great variety of authors and bindings, carefully chosen, from La Fontaine's Fables down to the most modern writers. The bias is, of course, towards the classics, but not in the least confined to them.

I was surprised to find how many translations enter into the juvenile production in France. There are Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver's Travels, the "Swiss Family Robinson," Don Quixote, already mentioned, Sir Walter Scott's wonderful historical romances—somewhat abbreviated for youthful consumption—Fenimore Cooper's ravishing tales, Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, "Helen's Babies," "Little Women" (very much adapted), Kipling's "Jungle Book," Anderson's and Grimm's Tales, Canon Schmid's stories from the German, some of Selma Lagerlöf's books, "Alice in Wonderland," and even "Buster Brown," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," and "Peter Rabbit!"

French parents complain, in spite of all the good material, that their children are not provided with enough good books, and that too many are deleterious. There are certainly books on flashy cinematographic subjects which cannot be recommended. However, an effort has been made to improve conditions, and a small group of people founded in 1920 the "Bibliothèque de nos Enfants," of which the Comtesse de Pange is now President. They print once a year a carefully selected list of books for children of all ages, and young people, in which there is a note describing the story and giving other details. These lists are on sale at the Musée Sociale in the rue Las Cases, at the nominal price of one franc, and armed with these no buyer of children's books can go astray with regard to the sort of influence wielded by the publications. These lists are very eclectic and not at all insipid, as might be feared. The 1928 list includes Bordeaux' "Vie de Guynemer" (Plon), Mary Duclaux's "Victor Hugo" (Plon), Mme Bonnafous's "Les Plus Belles Chansons de France," illustrated, with accompaniment for rounds and games (Larousse), Octave Feuillet's "Vie de Polichinelle" (Hachette), Gauthier-Villars's "Le Petit Roi de la Forêt," (tales of chivalry in the tenth century, Hachette), even "Rabelais pour la Famille," adapted by Marie Butts (Larousse), and authors as modern as Pierre MacOrlan and Mme Gerard d'Houville, and even pages chosen from Mme Colette (Larousse).

Hachette publishes an attractive paper-bound edition entitled "Encyclopédie par l'Image," each number consisting of photographic illustrations on every page of cathedrals, châteaux, costumes, as the title may be, with interesting bits of description and historical information, and selling for only four francs each, though both paper and print are good. While not made especially for children, these books interest and instruct them.

It is interesting to know that the best loved stories of our childhood—Blue Beard. Little Red Ridinghood, Puss in Boots, Cinderella, Tom Thumb, etc.—come from the French of Charles Perrault, who gathered them from folk tales and from tradition; and that this charming writer was also a physician and an architect capable of building the colonnade of the Louvre Museum; and that "The White Cat" and "The Blue Bird" were written by Mme d'Aulnoy, and "Beauty and the Beast" by Mme Leprince de Beaumont.

Edna Bryner wins the Dutton Book of the Month Prize for January with

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Revues

THE WHITE CAT and Other Old French Fairy-Tales. By Mme La Comtesse d'Aulnoy. Arranged by Rachel Field and drawn by E. MacKinstry. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1928. $3.

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS. By Clement C. Moore. With Pictures by E. MacKinstry. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1928. $2.

Reviewed by Margery Bianco

A NEW MacKinstry book is always something to look forward to with a thrill as one used to look forward to the Christmas stocking, confident that its contents, whatever form they may take, will be magical and exciting. But there are reasons why "The White Cat" especially has been awaited with eagerness, for it represents the collaboration of an artist absolutely in her chosen element, an editor, herself a poet and fine imaginative writer, who has known how to adapt the text to perfection, and a publisher with the rare insight to realize that the very best work can only result from an artist doing the particular thing he or she most wants to do. To anyone steeped, as Elizabeth MacKinstry is, in the spirit and atmosphere of eighteenth century France, the d'Aulnoy tales are a perfect vehicle; one can readily see how their wit, grace, and delicate sophistication would be irresistible. They are of the essence of a civilization to which Miss MacKinstry's own work dates back in spirit and inspiration. The pale bright colors of her drawings suggest the fragile tints of old porcelain, her figures move to the tinkling measure of flute and harpsichord, but beneath all is the robustness of contour, never lost sight of, which gives them force and vitality. For, however fanciful, deliberately elegant, as in these ladies with their drooping curls and garlands of pink roses, there is something militant in Miss MacKinstry's work, almost a challenge, shown in the cavalier fling of a line, the unexpected placing of a color. The little occasional drawings are as delightful as the color pages, and shape, size, and type have been chosen to make a well-balanced and harmonious book.

"The Night Before Christmas" is in some respects not so fine a piece of work or of printing as the d'Aulnoy book, but in its blaze of color it is a veritable "picture book" of the real old kind. Here are the strong pinks and reds and greens that carry one back to the picture sheets of many years ago, to the *images d'Epinal* and the pasteboard theatre, and are a welcome challenge to much of the over-delicate tinting of today. The drawings are reproduced by offset lithography, a process one would like to see more widely used in this country, as nothing else can quite take its place for effect in a book of this kind. The title-page is particularly good. Miss MacKinstry draws toys as one who really enjoys them; her dolls and wooden soldiers and Noah's Ark figure are the genuine thing, and children will particularly delight in the little sleepy white mouse on the first page, with his scarlet nightcap and bedtime candlestick. Clement Moore's much-loved poem has never worn such appropriate and spirited garb.

THE WONDERFUL LOCOMOTIVE. By Cornelia Meigs. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1928.

Reviewed by Anne T. Eaton
Lincoln School

PETER, a small boy who "loved no sound quite so well as the puff-puff of a steam engine," makes friends with Nels Stromberg, once an engineer, but who now spends his time helping to mend engines and doing other repair work in his house near the railroad yards. Many happy hours does Peter spend in this little one-room house, full of bits of machinery, nuts, bolts, and screws, and other delightful playthings. Most wonderful of all, in the yard, close to Nels's doorstep, stands a real locomotive, the remnant of former glory. The railroad men said that "44," once a fine engine, had made its last run and would stand on the side track until Nels sold it for junk, but Nels and Peter thought differently. Old "44" was the delight of Nels's heart, and while Peter watched him, he tinkered away hopefully, insisting that some day "44 would show them all what she could do." Then one night—and here the story really begins—Peter is waked from a sound sleep; Nels is calling him and "44" is ready to start. Alone, except for the puppy he rescues on the way, Peter makes a dashing journey from coast to coast, across the desert, over the mountains, helping a circus to reach a town on time, rescuing a party of children from a forest fire, and then triumphantly home again to tumble into bed.

This is one of the books that will find its readers from six to sixty. Out of curiosity I sent the story to a young railroad man who, fourteen or fifteen years ago, was another Peter, and I quote from his letter in reply. He says: "Miss Meigs has written a book that fills a long empty space in the children's libraries. I only wish she had written it years ago. She has taken a wonderful plot and made the most interesting story about railroads for little children that I have ever read. It carries out the ideas, rules, and the true spirit of railroads. It is as near perfect in the details of railroading as could be to make the engine 'magic.' It is geographically correct."

Adults need not be disturbed because of the combination of real and unreal, for it will not disturb the child reader. The locomotive is a real locomotive, and what the youthful engineer does is what the child who loves engines dreams of doing. Fairy tales, which supply the element of wonder, that most necessary element in a child's experience, are not always concerned with elves and dragons. In the fairylands of some children their places are filled by trains and shops, glorified but still actual and practical. This book will not conflict with the books of information, but will provide an outlet for the imagination along other lines than those of giants and fairies. The illustrations by Berta and Elmer Hader are delightfully satisfactory; they have caught the "go" and zest of the story.

SOKAR AND THE CROCODILE. By Alice Woodbury Howard. Illustrated by Coleman Kubinyi. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1928.

Reviewed by Catherine Woodbridge

THE problem of conveying some sense of the past to modern American childhood absorbs the interest of many writers to-day. The field of history has yielded material for a long time, but the more specialized one of archæology has been handled gingerly as being too technical. That it can be made, however, quite as interesting as history, is proved by Alice Woodbury Howard's "Sokar and the Crocodile." She has managed to write an authoritative work on ancient Egypt for ten-year-olds. The information is conveyed through the delightful medium of a fairy tale which the author modestly calls "archæologically impossible." She means simply that her picture is composite. The facts that she mentions are all sound enough. While she may have telescoped the history of Egyptian culture so as to have the whole field at her disposal for illustration, the combination can scarcely be misleading. Her aim is to convey the habit of mind which pervades the whole span of the art and there is time enough later to mark off into periods and dynasties.

Mrs. Howard's position on the staff of the Cleveland Museum, where she has actual experience in teaching the subject, gives her a right to speak. "Sokar and the Crocodile" was, in fact, written as a nucleus on which to center this instruction. No illustrations were to be found by the children themselves in the museum exhibits. That Egyptian art thus approached through a fairy story becomes a most absorbing picture book, is evinced by the children's own illustrations which testify to real observation.

But the book is not merely an interesting experiment in teaching. The story stands on its own merits. It is simply and directly told and moves with the rapidity that the age of ten demands. There is so much action that one is scarcely aware of the amount of information conveyed. Moreover, the story stays completely within its frame. Although entirely the invention of the author, it gives the impression of being the sort of tale that might have been told to a little boy of ancient Egypt. Anthropology went hand in hand with archæology when Mrs. Howard made the important discovery that the ease with which children pass from fact to fairy tale is not unlike the concrete attitude of mind of the Egyptian who pictured the immediate details of everyday life as continuing on into the spirit world. Thus, without pretending

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to, the book verges on folklore and suggests that archæology treated in connection with this time-honored source of children's stories ought to prove at least as interesting as history.

Added to the children's illustrations are admirable black and white drawings directly adapted from Egyptian originals by Coleman Kubinyi.

Mrs. Howard follows the story with a little explanation which contains much of pedagogical interest. Finally, she includes photographs of the works which inspired the illustrations, and a useful bibliography.

DARING DEEDS OF SEA ROVERS. By E. KEBLE CHATTERTON. New York: Lippincott. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALFRED F. LOOMIS

MR. CHATTERTON, prolific writer and compiler of nautical literature, has here grouped for juvenile reading some of the more spectacular exploits of roving mariners from Phœnician times down to the present day. Not all of these rovers, piratical or explorative, were British, but it is well worthy of note that where ships were captured on the high seas their cargoes or effects were "taken" by Britishers and "stolen" by foreigners. Perhaps this pernicious propensity of non-British mariners has been a cause of much of the international strife of the past centuries. In any case, a student of maritime history *à la* Chatterton cannot fail to gain the impression that British tars attacked only when the odds were against them, and that French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and American ships won only when their British adversaries were pathetically inferior.

The boy reader of this fat volume, looking for some grain of comfort to bolster his diminishing faith in American prowess, will learn with joy that the outstanding feature of the War of 1812 was "the success of the American privateers, which were very fast sailers." After this gracious admission, he will naturally expect the author to recount a couple of lively scraps in which the Americans knock the tar out of their opponents. Alas for such expectations. The only reported encounter between British and American vessels is one in which the Americans use their superior speed to flee from the enemy.

The material of the book is compiled with the author's usual skill and gives an excellent view of the important part played by sea rovers in the advance of civilization and knowledge. The present reviewer, a confirmed Anglophile, is moved to protest only because of the author's aggressive nationalism, which ill becomes a modern historian and which may go down hard with other than British readers.

MARIO'S CASTLE. By HELEN FORBES. Illustrated by MARGUERITE DE ANGELI. Macmillan. 1928. $1.75.

A VERY difficult task Miss Forbes has set herself in attempting to write "a mystery story for girls from ten to twelve" as the cover specifies. We should stretch the upper limit to fifteen with some gallery seats for mothers and grandmothers who love their daughters and their Italy, and then testify that Miss Forbes has succeeded most charmingly.

Boys like their mystery stories with plenty of blood and thunder through which they may wade to victory with the hero. Older people usually take theirs mixed with love interest, but young girls, though they read their brothers' books for lack of others, prefer their excitement more finely drawn and within the range of possibility in their more sheltered existence. Miss Forbes has sublimated the passion for mystery by making it center about the discovery of a painting by an old Italian master. The discoverer is a young American girl, of thirteen, named Elizabeth, who has been brought to Italy to learn the language and incidentally to be cured of her habit of stuttering. The picture had belonged to the owners of the castle which dominates the fascinating walled town where Elizabeth is studying, and to Mario, the attractive young heir of this castle, Elizabeth immediately communicates her news. Together, they frustrate the attempt of the villainous German tutor to steal the canvas by the aid of a mediæval trick and all ends happily with a village festa in honor of the picture and its discoverer.

The Italian setting and characters are true to their romantic originals; the American viewpoint true to what goes on in the head of an idealistic American girl, and the whole told with a purity and simplicity of style and with an absence of sops thrown out to grown up taste, that is most refreshing. This book should be given a very gold star on the list of possible Christmas presents for the young girl.

The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

CARICATURE. By C. R. ASHBEE. Scribners. 1928. $8.

This nicely printed, richly illustrated octavo offers not a history but rather a series of critical essays on caricature written in a mellow and genial style. The author, a veteran of the Arts and Crafts movement in England, writes with detachment, does justice to the great modern caricaturists of France, Germany, and America, perceives the lack of real caricature quality in much of the amiable social chronicle in *Punch*. He properly exalts his theme: "The history of modern Europe is indeed best told in its caricature, and such a history has yet to be written. It will reveal the power and the vision of the greatest caricaturists." The only encyclopedic feature is a list of caricaturists, which omits two of the strongest Americans, Homer Davenport and Art Young. In general the book may be cordially recommended to collectors or students of caricature who have passed the accumulative and aspire to enter the critical stage of their hobby.

THE ART AND CRAFT OF STAINED GLASS. By E. W. TWINING. Pitman. 1928. $12.50.

The frontispiece and other illustrations of this book dealing with stained glass as an artist's medium recall the pictorial prettiness of the eighteen eighties and nineties, and quite fail to celebrate the present vitality of the craft in England (to say nothing of America, France, and Germany). While its esthetic service may well be symbolized by zero, it has a distinct value as a text book of the fundamental workaday expedients of the craft.

The author is evidently an accomplished craftsman who knows how to make clear to a beginner the intricate details of the various processes implied in the making of a stained glass window. Especially to be commended are his chapters on Cutting, Painting, Firing, and Kilns. If he would call his book "The Craft of Stained Glass," we should have no quarrel with him.

A HISTORY OF WOOD-ENGRAVING. By PERCY DOUGLAS BLISS. Dutton. 1928.

This rapid survey by an English practitioner is conducted with vivacity and knowledge. It is a book of personal views, an extended essay, rather than a formal or complete history. The illustrations, one hundred and twenty in number, are chosen with taste and include singularly few hackneyed examples. As an introduction, and to awaken interest in this charming art, the book deserves generous praise. Its omissions and defects are more or less inherent in its very plan. In treating woodcuts one can hardly overstress book-illustration, yet it is unfortunate to omit the large single sheets, especially the sheets from Titian's designs, with their notable freedom of execution. Our American white-line men seem to deserve something more than the brief kick with which Mr. Bliss speeds them to oblivion. Against these defects we must set an amusing chapter on chapbook cuts, a subject usually ignored in the larger histories, a sufficient bibliography, and a good index. In his criticism of contemporary wood-engraving the author deplores the cult of the line block with its strong blacks, and pleads for methods which, while free from the smallness of the school of the 1870's and 1880's, should admit grays and generally enlist the wide resources of the burin. Broadly speaking, one can hardly imagine a better book for anyone who is beginning with wood-engraving, either as a student or as a collector.

Belles Lettres

BEOWULF AND EPIC TRADITION. By WILLIAM WITHERLE LAWRENCE. Harvard University Press. 1928. $3.50.

This book is not, as the title might indicate, another special study of Beowulf, but —what is far more welcome—a manual intended primarily for those who read the "Beowulf" for the first time. The "Beowulf" in translation is likely to prove more baffling to the average student than Chaucer in the original. Professor Lawrence discusses all the aspects of the poem that make it difficult for the beginner—the curious combination of folk-tale and history, the structure of society in the Heroic Age, the struggles and the tragedies of the various Germanic dynasties, and finally the interrelation of pagan and Christian ideals. The purely literary elements of the poem, such as the slow-paced narrative method and the alliterative style, he rightly leaves to the reader's own appreciation or the teacher's interpretation. As one might expect from a writer of Professor Lawrence's eminence in mediæval studies, the book may be read with profit by all students of our early literature. It is not a mere text-book. The author's fine scholarship and independent view of the problems involved constantly show through his clear exposition of the tangled body of criticism that has grown up around the Old English epic. Now that the "Beowulf" is taking its rightful place in the survey-courses of our colleges, this volume, the only book of its kind in English, should be particularly valuable to those who teach and those who learn there.

FORM AND STYLE IN POETRY. By *W. P. Ker*. Macmillan.

WANDERINGS IN MEDIEVAL LONDON. By *Charles Pendrill*. Macaulay. $4.

KEATS'S SHAKESPEARE. By *Caroline F. E. Spurgeon*. Oxford University Press. $10 net.

LIFE IN FREEDOM. By *Jiddu Krishnamurti*. Liveright. $2.

Biography

MEMORIES OF A SCULPTOR'S WIFE. By MRS. DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH. Houghton Mifflin. 1928. $5.

Mrs. French's memories begin at Washington with the assassination of Lincoln and, for the purpose of this book, close some ten years ago with her sculptor daughter's marriage at Taormina. Between these points, there are contacts with many great Americans—Saint Gaudens, Mark Twain, Peary among others. The stream of recollection ripples clearly and pleasantly, but too rapidly. The book seems addressed to an intimate circle to whose members the characters are known, and hence for whom a hint or even an enumeration suffices.

As is usual in autobiographies the early chapters are the best. One feels vividly the pall that fell upon Washington as Lincoln passed, one is transported to that Concord in which the aged Alcott and Emerson were still familiar figures. Here Mrs. French makes her picture, and it is one of the best bird's-eye views of old Concord that we have. The touch is very sketchy, but it is often telling and deft. One likes to think of the prophet Alcott remarking of his equally famous daughter Louisa that "she has passed that age beyond which a woman ever goes," and, more heroically, when saved from jail for refusing to pay taxes to a government supporting slavery, asking "What *right* Squire Hoar had to pay my taxes." One also welcomes the picture of Judge Hoar presiding at the unveiling of French's Minute Man and flustered at the appearance on the platform of Louisa M. Alcott, uninvited and accompanied by admiring fellow women. To her question, "Where shall we sit?" he answered promptly: "Anywhere in the town of Concord, Miss Alcott, except upon this platform."

Such are better samples of recollections that, often rather thin, are always amusing and very readable.

MY LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS. By *Eddie Cantor*. Harpers. $3.

NOTES BY LADY LOUISA STUART ON GEORGE SELWYN AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES. By *John Heneage Jesse*. Oxford University Press.

THE BROWNINGS. By *Osbert Burdett*. Houghton, Mifflin. $4.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SURGEON. By *John Morris*. Dodd, Meade. $5.

Fiction

MONSIEUR X. By ROBERT W. SNEDDON. Dial. 1928. $2.

Sicilians bearded and unbearded, an American reporter whose strongest expletive is "gee whiz," French detectives, circus performers, Apaches, *restaurateurs*, *concierges*, and antiquaries, and a young Scotch journalist engage in a scramble for possession of the original manuscripts of Molière's plays. The scramble is complicated by the chagrin of certain of the villians at not having their love returned, and by the rewarmed ashes of an ancient feud. The vile Monsieur X's minions commit murder, assault, and other atrocities in various parts of Paris and its suburbs. Love and the right conquers all at the end of this rather naïve and unconvincing, but otherwise pleasant enough, piece of trade goods.

THE ENCHANTING DANGER. By VERA WHEATLEY. Dutton. 1928. $2.50.

In her novel taking its title from Humbert Wolfe's phrase, "love's enchanting danger," Vera Wheatley has followed to an unhappy ending the emotional lives of four young people whose loves cross-fire. Of the four only one ever intended harm to any of them, but the powers of nature and fanaticism have their bitter way and youth goes under, as it must, when it is proud and true and thwarted. The scene is laid in Somersetshire, and the author's love of the country comes out very clearly in her picture of it, although this fondness blinds her not at all to the narrowness bred in the little village she describes. The sincerity of the book is indubitable, the characters achieve at moments a stark reality in their intensity, but there are also long stretches of the novel devoted to filling in which, however effective in themselves and atmospheric in their dialect, halt the action and blur decidedly the enchantment of the danger.

CHINA'S CRUCIFIXION. By PUTNAM WEALE. Macmillan. 1928. $2.50.

Putnam Weale evidently had a great deal of material on modern China at his hand and decided, perhaps unfortunately, that it could most attractively be presented to the public in the form of a novel. Of wholesale action there is plenty; kidnapping, revolutions, intrigue, or what-have-you, go on apace; but the characters who bring to birth these adventures never graduate from the puppet class. If you want to know what and how things happen in China, viewed by one who seems always to consider the Chinese as foreigners, "China's Crucifixion" is a good book to read; if you want to know what and how things happen to people it is less commendable.

BLUEFEATHER. By LAURENCE W. MEYNELL. Appleton. 1928. $2.

Though it is a well told, fairly interesting story of adventure and intrigue, this tale is handicapped by repetitious obviousness and a lack of ingenuity in the working out of the action. Alien conspirators have brought to its peak a gigantic plot to over-

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

throw British power in India, using as their chief tool a gentle Hindu visionary, Mahni the Deliverer, or "Bluefeather." For service agents have been on the trail of these rebellion instigators, and now in England, have the leader almost within their grasp. But he is a tremendous foeman, and with his colleagues puts up a nearly victorious fight to plunge the Empire into chaos. In our opinion, Mr. Meynell performed more advantageously in both "Lois" and "Mockbeggar," his two preceding novels.

THE PINFOLD. By J. S. FLETCHER. Doubleday, Doran. 1928. $2.

Occasionally there issues from the busy, detective fiction mill operated by Mr. Fletcher a sombre tale, such as this one, of Yorkshire farm life, stories which, even at their best, are rather tedious reading. A pinfold is a cattle-pound, and the lowly rustic folk whose trials we here follow are likened, in their boundage to the land, to miserable penned animals. Reuben, a young farm laborer, loves Mia, a fractious wench, and hopes to wed her, but she is had with child by a hypocritical rogue, and left in the lurch. Her brother Michael is betrothed to 'Becca, with whom he plans to settle in Canada, for which happier clime, after a great deal of sorrow has been weathered by them, in common with the luckless Mia and Reuben, the two couples at length embark. The bulk of the novel is composed of endlessly rehearsing the petty, squalid details typical of the simple yokels' daily existence.

THE ONE AND THE OTHER. By RICHARD CURLE. Doubleday, Doran. 1928. $2.50.

Spiritual gloom and psychological horror combine to set the tone of "The One and the Other," Mr. Curle's first novel. A story of tortured souls ends in a macabre dirge. We are hard put to it to give the precise quality of Mr. Curle's characters and situation. Not a single aspect of life as seen in the novel is agreeable or familiar to the average reader. Yet the apparent inevitability of the tremendous spiritual conflicts undoubtedly makes for power. We know of nothing similar to "The One and the Other"; it reminds us at times of the gruesome spirit of many of Poe's short stories, at times of the procedure of the normal detective story. Certainly, it will be very much too perverse for the general public, puzzling and enraging that public by its studied obscurity.

In brief, the plot tells of two brothers, of their hatred for each other and of their need of each other. It is more than likely that here Mr. Curcle introduces a little symbolism; the meaning, we believe, can easily be ferreted out. These brothers spread hate and suspicion and inhumanity throughout a small circle of intimates. Disaster necessarily crowns many lives. But what a weird menagerie of people Mr. Curle gives to us! They are no more real than an Aubrey Beardsley drawing; none of the novelist's art is expended to make them plausible. But in spite of all their difficulty, they hold our attention and beg for our understanding.

This satanic novel is not adapted to popular success. A certain professional esteem will be given to it, however. Of more than passing interest is the fact that Mr. Curle, who was Joseph Conrad's literary executor, has written pages 10-31 of "The One and the Other" in a manner that is startlingly reminiscent of "Nostromo." Discriminating readers will take Mr. Curle's first novel as an interesting stunt, and they will wait without apprehension for his next and possibly less experimental narrative.

FLOWERDOWN. By ANN KNOX. Century. 1928. $2.50.

Here is a story of complications, rapid action, pages of dialogue, and little reflection—a story telling what happens with little regard for how it is told. It treats a popular theme in modern English society—the aristocratic English family, impoverished by the war and forced to sell its estate, which falls into the hands of a newly-rich, "typical," American family. The plot takes its interest from the fact that the young people in the two apparently incompatible families, fall in love with each other.

There is in "Flowerdown" no suggestion of fine writing, little description, no deep psychological interpretations, and the character sketches are very close to being caricatures. The obvious contrast between the old aristocracy of England and the wealthy American family is so brusquely drawn that it is a discredit to both. And even the plot, which is the strongest feature of the book, loses its effectiveness by inaccurate timing: the dénouement is too rapid, too undeveloped—it gives the impression that there is a time limit and the rest of the facts must be told in the last four pages.

A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY. By *Lawrence Sterne*. Oxford University Press. 80 cents net.

A SEARCH FOR AMERICA. By *Frederick Philip Grove*. Carrier. $3.

THE SHADOW CHILD AND HER FAITHFUL SLEEPING-PARTNER. By *Judge Henry Neil*. Bible House, 443 South Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

THE HOUSE ON LITTLE FINGER. By *Thomas Meekin*. Grafton.

OLD TRAILS ON FIRE. By *Julius Reuter*. Cleveland, O.: Odin. $2.50.

WILLOW SMOKE. By *Ethel Kirk Grayson*. Vinal.

THE KING'S COIL. By *Condé B. Pallen*. Manhattanville Press. $2.

SPINNING DUST. By *Brainerd Beckwith*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Hebberd.

TWENTY-THREE TALES BY LEO TOLSTOY. Translated by *Mr.* and *Mrs. Aylmer Maude*. Oxford University Press.

THE WHITE ROBE. By *James Branch Cabell*. McBride.

HEARSAY. By *Henry Dynans Jessup*. Neale. $1.50.

NOVEMBER NIGHT TALES. By *Henry C. Mercer*. Neale. $2.

ASIMELECH POTT. By *Henry Dynans Jessup*. Neale. $2.

THE TRAIL OF THE GRAY DRAGON. By *H. E. Danford*. Vinal.

BOCCACCIO'S DECAMERON. Translated by *J. M. Rigg*. Dutton. $4.

Poetry

APHRODITE AND OTHER POEMS. By WALLACE GOULD. Macaulay. 1928. $2.50.

Although the name of Wallace Gould has been familiar to students of poetry for some years, "Aphrodite" is the first volume to present him to a more general public. What this larger public will make of him is an interesting speculation. His qualities, definitely his own, are such as will effectually keep him from quotation. He is witty, but his wit is special. He knows how to tell a narrative, but the stories will scarcely hold an average audience. He is familiar with the mythical amours on Parnassus, but he makes no Erskinian bid for popularity.

This is not to say that Gould is a bare or forebidding poet. His line has grace in spite of its length, clarity in spite of the poet's predilection for trope and extended metaphor. Although his loose free verse is most typical, Gould's occasional rhymes retain distinction. "Moment Musicale," faintly reminiscent of Wallace Stevens, sounds an insinuating music, a fragment of which follows:

Strum the guitar. The little gusts that fret
so lowly in the dense veranda vines,
teasing the fumes that leave your cigarette,
and uttering their melancholy whines,
rail at the movements of the fitful hand
that pulls the dulcet fancies from the strings——

Best of all are "Anne," "Rosalind," "Marnia," and the long title-poem. Here the swinging, masculine accents of Gould play freely, cutting through the jungle of rhetoric with a golden track. "Endymion," cluttered by detail and slowed up by overlengthy rhythms, has an excellent "dying fall."

I sit here sleeplessly—
foolishly, though, for one no longer a lover—
sit here with an air of patronizing sadness, wondering
if you sustained the rident leer when Zeus decreed the fate of your lover. I sit here wodering
if then you only assumed the rident leer as a haughty mask for woe. I shall always wonder
if you were forced to find for yourself the ultimate smile of love, but found it only after long waiting—
after long weeping—
by the side of the lover doomed to eternal sleep.

The volume is scarcely improved by the sonnets by Alfred Kreymborg which act as Foreword. Mr. Kreymborg has learned this form neither wisely nor well; his fourteen-line tributes have become an almost careless habit with him, a habit which his friends hope to see cured. Mr. Gould's own sonnets are not much better. Both Mr. Gould and Mr. Kreymborg should be satisfied with the idiom that is natural to them. No one requires the poet to be more than himself; no one desires him to be less.

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ELIZABETH AND ESSEX. By LYTTON STRACHEY. New York: Crosby Gaige. 1928.

AMERICA CONQUERS DEATH. By MILTON WALDMAN. New York: Edwin A. Rudge. 1928.

BALLADS FROM THE HIDDEN WAY. By JAMES BRANCH CABELL. New York: Crosby Gaige. 1928.

LAYOUT IN ADVERTISING. By W. A. DWIGGINS. New York: Harper & Bros. 1928.

THOSE who have been familiar with the work done by William Addison Dwiggins of Boston for advertisers have long wished that he might take a more prominent part in the designing of less ephemeral work. For many years he has been recognized as one of the foremost designers in this country, and perhaps the most versatile and thoughtful of all those who have done lettering and decorative design for purely commercial uses. Yet while his work along that line has been most in demand, there have been many sides to his versatility. Owing to the modesty with which he has clothed his genius, and the fact that much of his work is of such whimsical originality as to have only a limited (though an enthusiastic) appeal, as well as to the anonymity under which much of it has been put forth, and perhaps because the spotlight is too busy in Manhattan to find time to turn to Boston, very few people appreciate the quantity or the quality of creative design which has issued from his studio in the past decade or two.

This output has been primarily for purely commercial purposes, but to those who have assiduously collected the stray items from his former private press of the White Elephant, and the "Reports" of the Society of Calligraphers, there will come a realization that one of the most delightful workers in the graphic arts has been quietly putting forth a body of work which not only demands attention in any survey of the field in America, but which makes a collection unmatched for humor, fancy, and inventiveness.

Mr. Dwiggins has before now designed books. These have mostly been very intimate and personal bijoux, and usually hand-lettered in a style quite his own and quite lovely. In addition, there are many books which display his handiwork in the initial letters, headbands, and decorative illustrations—such, for instance, as the "Complete Angler" issued by Goodspeed earlier this year, and reviewed in this column. His skill as a typographer has frequently been exercised in such ways as the arrangement of advertisements, etc., but we now have before us four of his serious attempts at book format, one of them, in addition, being written by him.

It may be said at the outset that Mr. Dwiggins has approached his task as a designer, rather than as a typographer, yet with more knowledge of type and particularly of letters and lettering than the designer usually has. The result is that we are at once led to consider the element of design as applied to covers, title-pages, etc., rather than type layout. The exception to this statement is "America Conquers Death." Here is a printer's book, with a notable cover in blues and gold and black, depending for its success on the skilled handling of type, and one gorgeous initial letter in colors—a large, florid initial which completely harmonizes with the page.

The "Ballades from the Hidden Way" is done more in the way in which Mr. Dwiggins has been used to work—a commingling of type and decoration which, whimsical in conception, yet holds itself completely together as a printed book. The title-page is delightful and the decorations for the text pages—where most designers completely fail—are light and graceful embellishments which yet succeed in being completely a part of the page. The gold stamped design on the cover is one of the pleasantest bits of design for such a purpose which I have seen for a long time, having all the necessary quality of a combination of binder's stamps with a spontaneity not at all usual or easy to get.

"Elizabeth and Essex" is really a very fine piece of book making. I should say the page of text is almost perfect in proportions. The title-page is one peculiarly of and by Dwiggins, with two title lines in a thin, calligraphic italic. And there is a fine back-stamp and side-papers with an all-over pattern in the new style of decoration which Mr. Dwiggins has developed.

It is interesting to compare this limited edition and the trade edition of the same book. Such a comparison will help one to understand the reason why one book is better than another. There is a close-knit effect about the limited edition, an air of serene competency in the designing of it, which, in spite of the general similarity between the two books, is absent from the general edition.

"Layout in Advertising" is, I suppose, aimed at the man who is preparing advertisements. He certainly can get from it more first-class information than is probably to be found in any other volume: and in addition he will, I fancy, find himself brought up standing at times by a mind which works rather gaily around his problems. The real joy in this book will come, however, to the more or less casual reader, who will read, for instance, the "entr'acte" called "Product" with ever increasing appreciation of a mind which facilely deals with such extremely mundane affairs as advertisements, but which ought to be teaching philosophy.

Correct Printing

ONE of the "compensatory disadvantages" (to borrow a fitting phrase) of modern industrial productivity is the distinction between just "printing" and "fine printing," a distinction, most unfortunately, *with* a difference. This distinction has always been tacitly waived by a small portion of the printing fraternity since it first arose in the nineteenth century, as one may concretely see in the De Vinne exhibition at the Grolier Club. Mr. De Vinne was too good a craftsman to allow two qualities of work to issue from his office, though he, as did others, made use of more and less expensive papers, methods, and designs to achieve variety.

Of the few contemporary printing-offices which do not permit the distinction to obtain in their product, the Merrymount Press stands, in my estimation, first. On only one occasion, so far as I am aware, has Mr. Updike yielded to the insidious lure of machine composition, and I do not think I am wrong in saying that the result of that lapse (if I may so call it) was to show the superiority of his foundry type. I admit that here I tread on slippery ground. Yet a careful examination of the work of his press convinces me that there is sound reason in adhering to hand-set type if one is to produce, year in and year out, the best printing. There are before me three books which I shall speak of rather in detail as proof of this superiority.

Private Papers of James Boswell

WILLIAM EDWIN RUDGE has issued a gorgeous great announcement of the projected publication of the Private Papers of James Boswell in the collection of Colonel Ralph Isham. The history of this collection is sufficiently well known to book lovers—how the existence of the papers even was only recently known, and how they finally came into the possession of Colonel Isham. What is now under way in the publication announced is "to provide collectors with the most interesting of these papers, in a form typographically worthy of the *editio princeps* of Boswell's newly discovered writing." The editor of the volumes will be Mr. Geoffrey Scott, who has arranged for sixteen volumes. The first six are announced for immediate publica-

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tion: I. Early Papers; The Oath; 2. Zélide: and Papers in Holland; 3. Tour in Germany; 4. Boswell with Rousseau and Voltaire; 5. Porzia Sansedoni: Papers in Italy; 6. The Making of the Life of Johnson.

The typography of the volumes is to be by Bruce Rogers, and if the announcement is any guide to what is to follow, the books will be a treat. There is no attempt to maintain a uniform size, since the documents to be reproduced necessitate sizes to conform, but Baskerville type has been selected, hand made paper will be used throughout. No intimation as to binding is given, but it is safe to say that it will be in accord with the importance of the typography. I have seldom seen a more magnificent announcement of any project.

The price of the first six volumes is set at $350, with the price for the entire sixteen volumes at not to exceed $900. There are to be 570 copies of each volume.

R.

POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK. With a foreword by PHILLIPS RUSSELL. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1928.

TO "bring into being an edition which gives not only an idea of the actual appearance of the original Almanacks, but one which includes certain biographical and bibliographical material relating to them" is a creditable endeavor; I wish that the book might have had just that extra ounce of effort which was needed to make it satisfactory typographically. It is somewhat surprising, in view of the simplicity of eighteenth century printing, to find how often the spirit is lost by timidity or ignorance of the methods of building books at that time. Plenty of Caslon type is used in this book, but without vigor—as, for instance, on the title-page. And the paper is too heavy and too stiff. These are faults easily guarded against.

Franklin had a lot of fun with Poor Richard in his day; it is amusing to speculate upon what he would do and say today about conduct and the virtues; perhaps President Coolidge is the modern exemplar of that phase of Franklin's career! But in this book are set forth in fac-simile (small, but sufficiently readable) the almanacks for 1733, 1749, 1756, 1757, and 1758, together with portions of the text set up in type. The whole is a reasonably sufficient survey of the Poor Richard philosophy and vehicle to interest and instruct the young and those older to whom Poor Richard is only a name.

R.

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Points of View

On Lima Weather

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

The popular success attained by Thornton Wilder's "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" depends upon an intrinsically novel and interesting story, and upon literary qualities having nothing to do with the accuracy with which the local background is depicted. Rather unfortunately. its popularity causes it to be considered somewhat in the nature of a guide-book to Peru, more because nobody has recently written such an account of the country, than from any claims, stated or implied, to such accuracy in the book itself.

This has some amusing consequences. Americans coming to Peru since its publication are deluged with copies of the book, to read on the steamer. If they have been in Lima before, they smile or swear, depending on temperament, or merely look thoughtful, as the varied inaccuracies or misconceptions regarding Peruvian customs, scenery, or weather appear. Newcomers find Lima at least different from what they had anticipated, and usually disappointing. They search in vain for the supposed site of the "bridge," or the road between Cuzco and Lima, and it is the very exceptional present-day inhabitant of Lima who can be of the least assistance in their search. Yet if they do go up in the mountains, and beyond, they will find swinging bridges, not made out of osiers, it is true, but out of steel cables, and sufficiently strong to bear the weight of an over-loaded Dodge truck without serious danger of collapse. (If you really want to know what such a bridge is like, without coming to Peru, try the one over Fall Creek Gorge at Ithaca, New York, back of Sibley College, which gives under your weight so that you are always climbing, and swings back and forth in a most satisfactory manner—if you like that sort of thing. It is even more exciting to cross the Peruvian bridges in an auto, for the piers are just wide enough to let a car through, and often it must back up, to straighten around to get through without scraping.)

As to Peruvian customs, anything that one may discover at the present day need bear no closer relation to what is depicted in the book than what notes in the Philadelphia or New Orleans of today would to our own pre-Revolutionary methods of living. But when everything else changes, the weather—except possibly in "Deluge"—may be expected to be substantially constant, even over centuries.

Here again, if one merely *talks* with Peruvians, one might get the impression that it actually does rain in Lima, for they translate their term for fog into "rain," when speaking in English. An Englishman, however, would not think of an ordinary Lima fog as being even a bit thick. It is sometimes wet enough to cloud the windshield of an automobile, but not sufficiently so that the ordinary chauffeur has learned to remove it with that inexplicable bit of apparatus supplied as standard equipment, which we know to be a windshield-wiper. The pavements get moist, and the dust is covered with a quarter of an inch of slime, but as a reasonable deterrent for preventing a reckless young man from sallying forth and doing anything on which he is determined, it is such a weak excuse as never to occur to a Limeñan.

Prescott's statement regarding the climate of Lima, as given in his "Conquest of Peru," is possibly as optimistic an interpretation of what it is like as one could reasonably expect from one who was doubtless prejudiced in favor of a real old-fashioned New England winter, and thought of the tropics as "sweltering."

> The climate was delightful, and, though only twelve degrees south of the line, was so far tempered by the cool breezes that generally blow from the Pacific, or from the opposite quarter down the frozen sides of the Cordilleras, that the heat was less than in corresponding latitudes on the continent. It never rained on the coast; but this dryness was corrected by a vaporous cloud, which through the summer months, hung like a curtain over the valley, sheltering it from the rays of a tropical sun, and imperceptibly distilling a refreshing moisture that clothed the fields in brightest verdure.

Like Thornton Wilder, Prescott had never visited Peru, and although he had studied his sources much more carefully, is continually falling into such unfortunate inaccuracies, which only a few days, or weeks, of residence and travel in the country of which he is writing would have made impossible. The "vaporous cloud" rests over Lima during our summer, it is true, but that is winter in the southern hemisphere, and a most bleak and dismal winter it does produce, damp and chilly, so that the only thing that one can imagine as being described as "delightful" about Lima weather is when the sun breaks through the cloud. It is true, also, that there are fields of cotton, and sugarcane, and potatoes around Lima, of "brightest verdure," but that is entirely due to irrigation. On the barren hills near Lima which are not irrigated, absolutely nothing grows for eight or nine months of the year, while the fuzzy, low cacti and the rows of wild, dwarf, pine-apple-like plants merely hold their own until the fogs of winter furnish enough moisture to allow them to put forth their scarlet flowers. Where the fine powdery dust of the hillsides is thickly littered with loose, lichen-covered stones, apparently more of the fog is precipitated, and here delicate green leaves and bright flowers appear during the winter. These flowers are as transitory as the spring flowers of our own woods, and a month or two later one can scarcely find even their withered remains.

Practically all of the larger passenger boats coming to Peru arrive in Callao early one morning, and depart on the night of the succeeding day. One is sometimes tempted to think that even this would be almost long enough for one who is to write his impressions of Lima to collect sufficient material, and not have the first, clear impressions blunted by a longer stay. There are unexpected dangers in such a proceedure, however. The boat from the States which arrived in Callao on July 3, 1928, displayed to its passengers a Lima bathed in sunlight—most exceptional and unusual for midwinter—and by the time that most of them were up and about on the 4th, that too was a glorious sunshiny day. In talking with one of the passengers, a professor of Romance languages in one of our western colleges, he expressed himself as delighted with such weather, "and, you know, they tell me that it is winter here." He couldn't be convinced that he had experienced two most unusual winter days, and will doubtless spread far and wide, to the extent of his ability, the tale of wondrous winter weather in Lima.

Some people always do run into exceptional weather. A friend, who has resided for periods of always less than a year in different localities since leaving college, assures me that unusual weather always pursues him. It does really rain in Lima too, once in a generation. The last time was in 1925, and it just happened to be the year that Dr. Beebe on his "Arcturus Adventure," was searching for the Sargasso Sea, and didn't find it, and pushing on to the Galápagos in the Pacific, found the Humbolt Current changed in its course, and everything in the ocean, and on the adjacent land, profoundly affected. Farmers in Peru had their irrigated lands inundated by greatly swollen rivers, and grew crops on unirrigated pampas that had never been cultivated since a similar rainfall in the time of their fathers. Possibly it was such a rain as this that Mr. Wilder needs for the action of his story, only such a rain would effectually stop all other conversation and action, because it is so extraordinary.

The mysterious attraction which an unfamiliar country has for some authors is as unfortunate as it is natural. In seeking for a suitable scene in which to locate the action of a plot demanding unusual qualifications, a country of which the author knows little or nothing is vastly more useful than those with which he is familiar. Anything may happen there. The safer device, however, is to create a country, which will have exactly the desired specifications, and nobody can quarrel with the writer later and bring forth documentary proof to show his mistakes. To choose a real country, which to the writer seems so far away and removed from ordinary experience that he may safely take liberties in using its supposed characteristics in furthering the action of his book, merely invites the criticism from an ever increasing number of the reading public, from people who have been there, and in a more or less specific way, do know.

The countries to the south of the United States have been particularly unfortunate in this respect. When not neglected entirely, they have merely served as the scene for adventure stories, of which possibly the best example is Richard Harding Davis's "Soldiers of Fortune." Rex Beach's story of Panama is infantile in its handling of local color. Joseph Hergesheimer, on the contrary, has done remarkably well. True, "Bright Shawl" makes an even better movie, but his Cuba is recognizable. "Tampico" strikes a new note—that of the influx of American capital and industrial development, and one that has not been touched in a serious way by any other writer. His description of how one feels when sick with malaria is so vivid as to start one susceptible reader to taking quinine himself, and his explanation of what a "representative of the New York office" is really there for, is so close to the usual facts as completely to explain the invariable suspicion and dislike with which he is regarded. The plot is an outgrowth of the locale, and not ready-made and forcing the scene to conform to its demands, and is authentic in a way that a plot in search for a suitable background never can be. If books dealing with the tropics are to ring true to the experiences and convictions of the Americans who have lived and worked there, they can only be written by authors who consent to come to the tropics and stay long enough to obtain a sympathetic understanding of its varied characteristics.

GEORGE N. WOLCOTT.

Lima, Peru.

John Burroughs

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The essay on John Burroughs (of whom I have not read one word, I regret to say) was disturbingly provocative of thought to *me*, as *I imagine it might be* to various and sundry young people in this country and all countries of the world. You will pardon me, I hope, if I try to express some of those thoughts, and if I put some difficult questions to you. Burroughs, you say, was "educated on scraps." Badly educated on scraps.

Now, I am twenty-five years and two months old; a graduate of an estimable college; and, I hope and believe, possessed of the requisite modicum of brains to hold my place in this (as Mr. Pitkin holds) overbrained country. Yet with all that I am positive that I am educated on scraps, and have a taste and a type of mind for scraps—in other words, unscholarly. Totally unstudied in philosophy, I have developed one of my own, which is perhaps (according to you) my "ruin" (you say Emerson engendered in young men a hope of philosophy by intuition), and that's one of the problems. Philosophic education. What should I read in philosophy? *Should* I read philosophy? By the Lord, it is no "hope" of philosophy by intuition, that I have, but a philosophy! Terribly untutored and perhaps wrong; nevertheless "it satisfies"; and I have been told, and believe, that the purpose of philosophy is the accommodating of a mind to the world, physical and metaphysical. If it has led me to cut out psychology (as a study, not as an observational delight and semi-vocation); and also psychiatry, sociology, economics, etc., etc.,—the philosophy I have being, I fear, too much given to Emersonism to admit of the study of such things, I cannot see how that accuses me of being uneducated in the certain lines I have picked up.

I am educated on scraps. I, in company with everyone else in the world, cannot ever read all the great literature even in English; I cannot (having a wretched memory) quote from any author (modern sign of a good education, according to the advertisements!) and I am, in my own private thoughts, about as puzzled and hectic, as fragmentary and unsystematic, as possible.

So:—what is a good education? I want to know! I want to start at it! I've always read for pleasure; the "Faerie Queene" at present; "Morte d'Arthur" just recently; Robinson Jeffers now, too—grand hash! Should one indulge in a system comparable to the Five Foot Bookshelf? (And that isn't an ironic question, for I imagine that a good education might be obtained if such a method should be more widely carried out.) What should one do to obtain a good education? I have no Latin, no Greek; read the authors of both in translation, though not half as much as I should or want to.

What is a good education?

My mind is full of theses and appositions of mad theories and ideas. None of them come to fruition; nevertheless, I am reading continually for my own pleasure in good books; what else can be done for a good education?

By a good education, neither you (I think and hope) nor I, mean an education which attempts to embrace all arts and sciences, as so many of our "young" men (mostly from Montmartre, such as Wyndham Lewis—whom I have not been able to read—and also the Frenchmen Gide, Valéry, etc.) seem to boast of; in my case, for example, an education which will have the *semblance* of culture, and the *actuality* of intellectual integrity and self-respect, as a result—semblance, since culture is not to be obtained ever by anybody, in the sense of general knowledgeability.

Well—many words, many words. John Burroughs was probably a mediocre anyhow; would have been (like Ruskin) if he was excellently educated. (Now, that jab at Ruskin is an example of my intellectual insufficiency, since I criticise him from hearsay without word of knowledge of his own works!!) Keats, Whitman, probably Conrad, and possibly Shakespeare, were "educated on scraps." Education, it is a semi-truism, is not one of the most necessary accompaniments to genius, although it is a comfortable aid. But I do want to know what a *really good education would include.*

If you can't answer that in less than ten pages, please refer me to some book that would be apt and to the point.

To go back to that business of philosophy: I would be very much delighted, also, to know what good philosophy ever came to a man other than by "intuition." Philosophy, in this case, I think is to be interpreted as an accommodation of the mind to the cosmos, as I said before, rather than an interpretation and a study of astronomy, physics, etc., and of human relationships. On the subject of human relationships, I could wax extremely wroth, when I consider the attempts (unread, save in scraps!) of the modern psychologists. Philosophy, like the ocean, has nothing to do with mankind individually, little to do with it collectively, and chiefly to do with the universe. As I said, I have my own private pet solution to the problem that in all philosophies most puzzles and anguishes men,—namely, *purpose;* and it is comparitively intuitional, though I can trace it to the influence of several books non-philosophical.

So: What is a good education?

What is philosophy? (I don't want a dictionary definition of it, either.)

More ideas on it!—The Stoics are, says Webster, a "sect" who meet or regard all vicissitudes calmly. As I remember, the Epicureans were a bunch of sybarites. Perhaps not. But they had some fixed idea, as "that the exercise of the senses was the chief purpose and enjoyment of life—" something of that sort. And so on, and so on, through the other schools. By heck, I can't see it!

Also, says Webster, philosophy is "the knowledge of phenomena as explained by and resolved into causes and reasons, powers and laws." Aristotle, his influence! And by heck, I can't see that, either! Nor "a systematic body of conceptions or principles, *ordinarily with the implication of their practical application.*" This is all knowledge, "larning'," facts. Philosophy—isn't this true?—treats only of those things which *have no facts.*

MARTIN MAXMILLAN.

[*Surely there are educators and philosophers reading the* Review *who can answer these easy questions. And would they tell the Editor at the same time what life is, and God, and time, and space. But at least someone must agree or disagree as to education by scraps and philosophy by intuition.*—THE EDITOR.]

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The Reader's Guide

CONDUCTED BY MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*

R. H. M., is going to the Holy Land and asks for a guide-book and for books of general interest.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK'S "A Pilgrimage to Palestine" (Macmillan) is said by those who have used it to fill the needs of an actual traveller, and will be found by anyone to be an interesting and inspiring travel record. I would certainly get "The Graphic Bible," by Lewis Browne (Macmillan), author of "This Believing World," for its animated maps and clear, concise narrative offer a good blend of geography and history. Also I would get "The Picture Map of the Holy Land," drawn by Harold Haven Brown and published by Bowker, and hang it on the wall now; you will get it after you come back if you have not, and why not enjoy it in advance as well? It is in colors and has little pictures in appropriate places. "Bible Lands To-day," by W. T. Ellis (Appleton), is a guide to pilgrims visiting any country mentioned in the Bible, the section on Rome and on Palestine being especially full; this is an excellent work for a Sunday-school library—indeed, all these books are. J. Baikie's "The Glamour of Near East Excavation" (Lippincott) is an account of recent archæological discoveries, especially exciting in this section. The same author's history, "Ancient Palestine," is published by Macmillan. "The City of the Great King," by William Lyon Phelps (Cosmopolitan), and Bruce Barton's "The Man of Galilee" (Cosmopolitan), are both illustrated in color by Dean Cornwell; yet cost no more than novels, something unusual for travel books in color-illustration. "Under the Gray Olives," by Marian Keith (Doubleday, Doran), is an illustrated travel-novel, and the scenes of Marmaduke Pickthall's "Oriental Encounters" (Knopf) are laid in this vicinity. "Palestine Old and New," by Albert M. Hyamson (McBride), is a new, illustrated description and guide for readers or for travellers.

THIS department would be glad of more entries for the inscription to be carved over the door of the B. F. Jones Memorial Library, as lately requested; so far, but four quotations have been suggested. *E. G. R., Wakefield, Mass.*, suggests the fourth line of a quatrain by Emilie Poulsson, "Books are friends; so let us read." *S. G., New York*, says that over the fireplace in the dining-room of John Fiske was cut a quotation from the Latin whose translation is "Learn as if you were to live forever; live as if you were to die to-morrow." *E. R., New York*, sends two lines, the first of the famous Keats sonnet, "Much have I travelled in the realms of gold," and the first of Edward Dyer's poem, "My mind to me a kingdom is." My own contribution, to encourage the others, is from William Blake:—

Man was made for Joy and Woe;
And, when this we rightly know,
Thro' the World we safely go.

That, I think, might set them off in the right frame of mind toward the compulsory happy ending.

Readers have responded briskly to the call for books about rural school life. *L. E. G., Akron, O.*, bids me not forget Catherwood's "Rocky Fork," whose descriptions have always remained with her. *L. H. P., Orange, Mass.*, adds the stories by C. A. Stephens, which have been collected in book form by the publishers of *The Youth's Companion*. The three volumes, "When Life Was Young," "A Great Year of Our Lives," and "A Busy Year at the Old Squire's," include many incidents, founded upon fact, of life in the old-time schools. These books, he says, are well worth the attention of anyone interested in old-time rural life. *M. K. R., Madison, Wis.*, says that Selina Peake in "So Big" went out to teach a country school and that Martha Ostenso's "Wild Geese" (Dodd-Mead) is a story of a country school teacher. (Several readers have spoken of this novel.) The young hero of Herbert Quick's "The Hawkeye" (Bobbs-Merrill), says M. K. R., got his start in life in teaching school, and in "The Prairie," by Walter Muilenburg, there are two chapters, 17-18, in which the organization of a school district in a pioneer community is described. Running all the way through Ruth Suckow's "Country People" (Knopf) there are suggestions of the evolution of education through three generations. These titles are gleaned from a study of rural life in American fiction made for a graduate course in Rural Sociology at the University of Wisconsin, so now I know where to go for further data along this line.

R. G. H., Polytechnic Country Day School, Brooklyn, tells me to induce Dorothy Canfield's "Understood Betsy," which has a lot about rural school life in Vermont; Catherwood's "Rocky Fork," John Fox's "Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come." which has several chapters on a rural mountain school; Justus's "Betty Lou of Big Log Mountain," which also pictures a southern mountain school; Donahey's "Mary Lou" and "Mary Lou's Treasure"; Trumbull's "Shirley Takes a Chance," and Willis's "Bronze Turkey." Louise Alcott's "Under the Lilacs" has a better rural school than the one in "Little Women," which is more of a small-town school, and the second of the "Tuckaway" books, "The Tuckaway Twins," by Jordan, has a rural school. "Of these," R. G. H. says, "Catherwood's is almost a classic, and has to do very largely with the rural school life of the children in the story; 'Shirley Takes a Chance' gives a charming picture of country school life, and 'The Bronze Turkey' gives a Canadian school in an isolated district."

M. G. B., Chicago, asks for books for a class in leadership.

THERE is, I suppose, a consensus of opinion as to just what leadership, in this sense, may be, and how a class may prepare one for it, but I have never been able to get it clear in my mind. There are any number of books on personality and how to put it over, if I may in such offhand fashion describe an effort taken with the greatest seriousness by many students. But I would give a gross of these manuals for one chapter of Ernest Dimnet's "The Art of Thinking" (Simon & Schuster), such as the one that shows an expert mechanic entrance upon a crowd of chatterers poking the entrails of a disabled car, a great doctor's appearance in a clinic, an artist's progress down a line of student-easels. "The thinker," says he, "is preëminently a man who sees where others do not." That, I submit, is a good start for leadership; before you can make others see as you do you really must see something for yourself. Anything short of that is pure bluff. If a book can make a man think, this one will; it has no short-cuts or formulae, but it does effect an impetus that all but blows a reader off his feet. The last word in the title of Abbé Dimnet's earlier book, "French Grammar Made Clear" is in this country often misquoted as "easy," this always gets on his nerves; he knows that French grammar cannot be made easy and that no one with a head should expect or desire it to be. He makes it clear; further responsibility rests with the student. In like manner he has demonstrated that there is an art of clear, constructive, and even creative thinking, and with brilliant and persuasive devices he has startled the reader into this unaccustomed exercise. If this description does not send the readers of this column into its pages, I miss my guess.

"Psychology and the Day's Work," by Edgar James Swift (Scribner), is a practical guide of value in business, helpful to anyone whose business it is to work or play with other people; to those who hope to direct the work or play of others it will be especially useful. It is rich in anecdote, and though open-minded to new theories is not tied fast to them. Though it could be used as a text-book, its almost conversational style lends itself to rapid and pleasant reading.

M. B. P., Wenonah, N. J., asks for a few new titles for a group of women reading about China, and E. B., Minneapolis, Minn., for books to help the Junior Commission of the Y. W. C. A., that has chosen China for the year's project.

"THE SOUL OF CHINA," by Richard Wilhelm (Harcourt, Brace), is the result of twenty-five years residence, but many a man could live there longer and not see a fraction of what this observer has recorded in uncommonly graceful fashion. He made himself part of this crucial quarter-century by an evident liking for the people and their world; he has been interested in philosophy and religion, in social life and morals, in politics, in missionaries, and in leaders, with many of whom he was friends. The book has color and charm; the translation from the German is by Holroyd Reece.

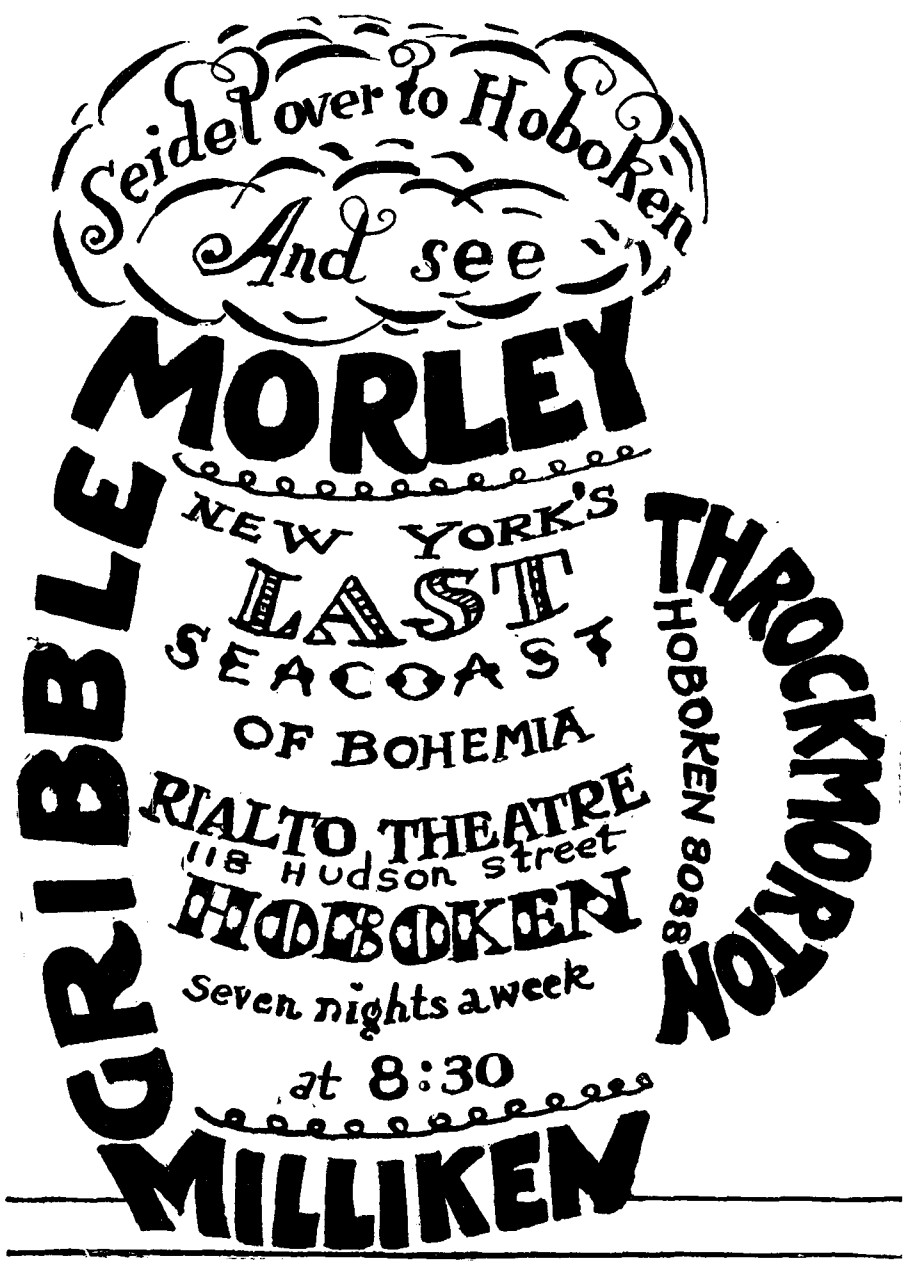
About Johan Gunnar Andersson's "The Dragon and the Foreign Devils" (Dodd, Mead) is an ingratiating quality that makes it easy to read and hard to forget—something that cannot always be said of sinological books. The author is a Swedish geologist consulted by Chinese authorities; he writes of personal experiences such as that with a "fossil dragon," of bandits more or less evil—among the latter being the one who grew so fond of his prisoners that he gave them his umbrella at parting lest they get wet on the way back; of contemporary history, of missionaries — of whom in certain cases he points out the admirable qualities, while holding less favorable opinions of the value of missions in general. It is full of suggestions on how a foreigner may take Chinese life rightside up.

"Old Buddha," by the Princess Der Ling (Dodd, Mead), is a biography of the Empress Dowager by one of the ladies of her court. The style is not far from that of a novel, details and dialogue somehow calling up the play by Lytton Strachey, "The Son of Heaven," one of whose two performances I saw and have not since forgotten. It begins like a movie, language and all, but the extraordinary vigor of the lady takes possession of the story and of the reader in no time.

"Oriental and Occidental Culture," by Maurice Parmalee (Century), intends to bring the twain somewhat nearer to meeting, if it can be done by intensive effort on the part of a sociologist who has traveled as widely as he has read. It shows their quietism against our activity, adaptation against perfectionism, familism against individualism, caste against class; seclusion of women, recognition of sex, ideas of recreation, ideals of social life, are rapidly set out by one whose cool detachment from both points of the compass is at moments almost disconcerting. Imperialism gets no help from this book, but mutual understanding decidedly will; it would strengthen any reading list of this sort.

There is a new collection of "Poetry of the Orient" (Knopf) gathered by Eunice Tietjens from China, Japan, Persia, Arabia and India, in translations made by English and American poets. For somewhat younger readers there is a novel "The Short Sword," by V. M. Irwin (Macmillan), whose hero, a Chinese boy of fifteen on an isolated Manchu farm, is caught in the current of contemporary events and comes at length to Shanghai. The accuracy of statements and setting is attested by the Chinese scholar who writes the preface.

Another batch of quotations for the story-telling room has gathered, and will be printed soon. Harcourt, Brace, write that they publish all of Juliana Ewing's stories in the "Queen's Treasure Series," so that the inquirer for "Mary's Meadow" will have no difficulty in getting it.



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Recent Fiction

ARIADNE. By ISADORE LHEVINNE. New York: Globus Press. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

ISADORE LHEVINNE, the brilliant author of "The Leper Ship" of two years ago, suffers from a multiplicity of talents. His mind at present seems to be, as Keats described his own, "like a pack of scattered cards." But too many of the cards are aces for him to be lightly dismissed. "Ariadne," Mr. Lhevinne's first novel, is full of faults, but they are suspiciously like the faults of genius, due to lack of restraint, not, as with most writers, to lack of anything that needs to be restrained. With all its wildness and extravagance the book is never dull. Nor is it a book to be easily forgotten. It renews on a larger scale the promise of "The Leper Ship," and makes one additionally interested to watch Mr. Lhevinne's future work.

It begins as a trenchantly satiric description of the life of musical coteries in New York, in which several of Mr. Lhevinne's acid sketches may be recognized by those intimate with the musicians of the day. All this part of the book is admirably done. But just as the reader has settled down to enjoy Mr. Lhevinne's pungent wit in the comfortably familiar atmosphere of New York he is whirled away to Russia, in the wake of a romantically described love affair, and plunged into the horrors of the Russian revolution. We are asked to accompany the hero, a Jewish musician, in pursuit of the first Ariadne, across the wastes of northern Russia and to become marooned with him in a village the savagery of whose inhabitants is presented with much of the harsh lucidity of "The Leper Ship." Here, amid arson, rape, and murder, the second Ariadne obtains control of the stage. Briefly the pathetic figure of the young Czarevitch or an equally pathetic pseudo-Czarevitch passes before the footlights and disappears. Then in a hectic dream of many pages the third Ariadne, daughter of a centaur and, naturally, a centaur herself, monopolizes the scene. (The eroticism of this portion is quite unrestrained.) Eventually the hero awakes and gets back to America, happily, as one supposes, rid of his Ariadne complex. But no, in the last chapter the second Ariadne reappears, and the unreluctant hero and one-third of a heroine are united in New York. Mr. Lhevinne's central theme, the esthetic inspiration of love—his musician is supposed to have composed some major pieces under its influence—fails of satisfactory illustration because of the conventionality of his women. None of the three Ariadnes—of whom the centaur-lady is the most attractive, the other two being cinematographic vampires—seems quite worth a trip to Archangel and back. That Mr. Lhevinne possesses a powerful imagination many passages of "Ariadne" as of "The Leper Ship" abundantly prove. That he will be able satisfactoritly to harness it to a task of prolonged logical and psychological construction is something to be hoped for.

THE WHISPER OF A NAME. By MARIE LE FRANC. Bobbs-Merrill. 1928. $2.

NEARLY all nations indulge in the curious habit of awarding literary prizes, but in France the habit has become a disease in recent years. The novel, biography, or modest book of verse, which cannot boast on its paper band that it has been crowned by an Academy, or has won the Chose Prize for 1928, is indeed lost on Parisian bookstalls. However, the creation of such awards goes on so rapidly that there is little doubt but that the output of the writers of France will itself be surpassed eventually. When there are no more books left to crown, perhaps we shall see the dignified guardians of these prizes seeking out shy authors in their garrets and begging them to write another book for their particular competition. Edouard Bourdet, of "Captive" fame, has made a comedy out of this situation which is for at least one act remarkably funny.

Mme. Marie Le Franc, who, though born in Brittany, has lived in Canada most of her life, received the Femina Prize of last year for her novel "Grand Louis l'Innocent," which has been translated as "The Whisper of a Name." One suspects that like the hero of Bourdet's comedy she was something of a dark horse in the competition, selected as a matter of policy rather than because of the outstanding excellence of her work. Her name, previously, has been unknown to fame, and there seems no great cause to celebrate the virtues of her pen as displayed in her prize book. It is one of those almost actionless, gloomily poetic tales of a woman alone in an old house on a moor near the sea. The wind and the sound of the sea fill her days and nights with a despairing terror until she finds an interest in caring for a curious mental deficient of the neighborhood, Big Louis. No one knows his origin nor the reason for his state of mind. She teaches him to fish, to take care of himself and of her, wins his respect, and comes herself to care for the man who emerges slowly from the child-like creature of the beginning. There are no other protagonists and we are told nothing about the background of Big Louis. Finally the two people find they are in love, whereupon, without restoring Louis fully to his senses, the book ends. As a purely technical accomplishment Mme. Le Franc's story may have value, for she succeeds in conveying the mysterious Breton background admirably, and in making the development of Louis thoroughly convincing. Her prose is stronger and less feminine than in the usual run of such distinctly introspective affairs, but the book as a whole is neither important nor liable to interest many readers. Like the life of its heroine, it is slightly dull and unremittingly gloomy. In spite of its evident sincerity, manifested throughout, it does not compel attention.

DEPARTURE. By ROLAND DORGELES. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

LIKE many other writers who have made their reputations with a war novel, Roland Dorgelès has not been able to recapture in his later work the sincerity of accent which distinguished "Les Croix de Bois" even amidst a flood of similar trench reminiscences. "Departure" is the English version of his newest book, which seems to combine the attractions of a guide book with those of a mystery story. In its somewhat shallow and unreal way it is frequently interesting and always thoroughly easy to read, but not much more can be said for it. Dorgelès appears to have made a voyage to the Far East aboard a Messageries liner, during which he has noted with considerable ability the usual shipboard types, incidents, and transformations of character. He has also described in what used to be called an impressionistic manner the various ports at which the ship called,—Suez, Djibouti, Kandy, Penang, Singapore, Saigon. Then he has concocted an intrigue to suit his background, by placing an opera company aboard. The soprano is of course the property of the tenor, a likable but mysterious young man, who is in reality a fugitive from justice, enrolled in the troupe at the last moment in the hope of escaping with his beloved. A wealthy Shanghai broker covets the lady; another young person sympathizes with the tenor; and so on to a tragic ending by suicide for the man, —a finale quite unbelievable, and not perhaps designed to be taken too seriously, for the whole affair exists only in the mind of the author, who is merely occupying the *longueurs* of his voyage by constructing this intrigue. The moral seems to be that ocean travelers should be watchful of their actions, or the sardonic gentleman in the next deck chair may turn out to be a novelist, observing them for future use in a book.

The book is a hybrid, and as such possesses a certain experimental value, but there is nothing permanently memorable about it. M. Dorgelès handles both the narrative and the peripatetic elements well enough, and his book has been rendered into English with skill by Pauline E. Rush. Yet this is scant praise for the man who seemed likely to achieve a commanding place in French post-war literature only a few years ago. "Departure" is extremely good journalism, while its author's first few books were infinitely more.

THE TOP KICK. By LEONARD H. NASON. New York: Doubleday, Doran. 1928. $2.

MR. NASON once more assays that seemingly inexhaustible mine of the A. E. F. adventure—and again with gratifying success. "Chevrons" and "Sergeant Eadie" proved conclusively that the interest back home in what the boys did "over there" still persists. Generals and field officers are planets remote from Mr. Nason's world. Their movements have for him a purely academic interest. Line officers occasionally like stray comets impinge on the orbit, but soon they trail away into illimitable space. His world of the non-com and buck private is far more interesting and real.

The book contains three separate tales of the A. E. F.—A Sergeant of Cavalry, The Roofs of Verdillot, and A Matter of Business. The first recounts the extraordinary adventures of Sergeant Nelson Colburn, Troop A, 18th United States Cavalry, whose determination to see action led him to commit a serious military offense in the hope of getting transferred to infantry replacements. His dangerous ambition was gratified and the reader is rewarded by nearly one hundred pages of stirring battle scenes.

The Field Ambulance does not at first thought seem to lend itself to the lighter vein, but in The Roofs of Verdillot Mr. Nason describes a crew of such jolly rascals that one can never be really anxious at the tense moments when machine-gun bullets whine and shells crash on the road just ahead. An advance dressing station was to be established at Verdillot, but when Wally and Rouge drove their ambulance with its load of Red Cross men into that little red-roofed village they suddenly realized that they had unwittingly penetrated the German lines. Their mad flight presented comic elements of which the author has taken full advantage.

The last is an escaped prisoner story, its hero David Wladichesnikov who prefers to call himself Sheehan. Ignominiously captured by the Germans he shows in his escape qualities of courage and resourcefulness that are admirable. A story with many thrills and not the least amusing of the three.

SQUAD. By JAMES B. WHARTON. New York: Coward-McCann. 1928. $2.

MR. WHARTON who saw service with the 11th Infantry, 28th Division, has incontestably produced a war book of the first order, one that can be fairly ranked with Captain Thomasson's "Fix Bayonets!" and Boyd's "Through the Wheat." "Squad" is the American infantry in microcosm. It is not merely the campaign experience of a corporal and seven men; it is a presentation of average men's psychology as revealed under the terrible stress, mental and physical, which modern war entails. Mr. Wharton shows us the American doughboy, not in the form of a Greek god on a Liberty Loan poster, but as he appeared to his comrades, in every light save the heroic.

The Corporal, a conscientious youngster just out of high school, was their logical leader. Of the seven privates, two were typical young Americans; there was a Swedish-American rancher from Texas, a Serb coal miner from Pennsylvania, a Jewish shoe store proprietor from the Bronx, an Irish-American, and an Italian.

In the conversation of these men there is some humor and a deal of coarseness, but the Niagara of verbal obscenity that certain writers consider a soldier characteristic is absent. Not having been long enough out of their diverse occupations of civil life they are not trimmed to a pattern. Veterans will recall cases of self-inflicted wounded—there were many such during campaign. Mr. Wharton describes a typical instance. Then there is the common or garden variety of coward, a whining youth who takes the first opportunity in an attack to separate himself from his squad and drift to the rear. But these cases are, after all, exceptional, and the dogged courage of the majority who, disillusioned, miserable and with scant hope of survival, advance to the slaughter, is the dominant note in a graphic portray of modern war. "Squad" will give no comfort to chauvinists and youths imbued with martial ardor. They should read it, if only to apprehend the truth of Sherman's dictum.

THE WOMEN AT THE PUMP. By KNUT HAMSUN. New York: Alfred Knopf. 1928. $3.

THIS is a narrative of a small seacoast town in Norway woven from the gossip of the woman who gather about the town pump—gossip smoothed, cut, and pieced by Mr. Hamsun. The method is an interesting one in that it gives a broad and comprehensive picture of the town, but it is a picture that is deficient in clearness—there can be no central character—and one that must inevitably emphasize corruption, decay, and blasted reputations.

Mr. Hamsun has stepped outside the domain of the Ego where he has ruled so superbly in "Hunger," "Mysteries," "Pan," and that new fresh world that he created in the "Growth of the Soil." He has laid aside ecstasy, and mystery, and written a sound book on a sound theme but not a great book. It is, however, a work that should interest all students of Hamsun, and form an interesting parallel to the Main Street that is by now thought to be an American institution.

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